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# A HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

BY

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
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NEW YORK  
HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS

1897

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## PREFACE

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THIS book has been written, in the first instance, to meet the requirements of my own classes in their preparation for the Leaving Certificate, the University Local, and other Public Examinations. I have good reason, however, for believing that the want of a new text-book of Literature is pretty generally felt, and in that belief the book is published for the use of secondary schools and private students. It embodies the practical experience of nearly twenty years' teaching of the subject with which it deals.

The book is a brief review of English Literature throughout its entire extent, from 449 to 1894. This long stretch of history is taken in six convenient periods, and a survey is made of each period, first in its political, and secondly in its literary aspect. A classification of the leading authors of the period is then made, and is followed by biographical and critical sketches, containing the most recent results in fact and fair criticism. In treating of the poets I have made it a special feature of the book to give specimens from their work at once characteristic of their style and illustrative of their genius. Notice is taken of most, if not all, of the minor authors of established reputation; and each period is closed with pretty full chronological lists of the various authors belonging to it, and the more important works which they produced. While mostly meant for pur-

poses of reference, these lists will also serve to show the nature and extent of the literary wealth of each successive period.

By an arrangement of type the book is adapted for various courses of study. It will probably be enough for beginners to keep to the larger type, and it may even be advisable for the teacher to restrict their studies to a selection of the more important authors.

In a book of this kind, involving the record of thousands of facts, it is impossible that perfect accuracy can at once, if at last, be attained. It is as accurate, so far as it goes, as I have been able by a considerable amount of reading and study to make it. I shall be thankful to receive notes of correction, and any suggestions that I may be favored with will be carefully considered.

In its preparation I have necessarily been indebted to many writers. Where my obligations are so manifold and various, it would be invidious to particularize them; but I cannot avoid expressing my indebtedness, direct or indirect, to the professorial teaching and published work of Professor Masson, of Edinburgh. Whatever of merit the book contains is largely due to him; the faults are my own.

American Literature being an important branch of English Literature, I have attempted some notice, however inadequate, of its producers and their work; and in dealing with living authors, American or British, while endeavoring to omit no name of conspicuous note or promise, I am conscious of the tentative character of my selection. This part of my task, I feel, must be supplemented by the intelligent teacher.

J. L. R.



## INTRODUCTION BY PROFESSOR MASSON

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MR. LOGIE ROBERTSON'S *Manual of the History of English Literature* seems to me to have characteristics distinguishing it from other manuals of the kind, and specially fitting it for use in schools and by private students. Proportion of space is well kept throughout; and the general introductions to the several periods of the literary history, as well as the biographical and critical sketches of the chief poets and prose-writers in each, are such, both in matter and in expression, as might have been expected from one whose own literary faculty has been proved by previous productions of his pen, some of them in the shape of essays and editorial commentaries, and others in a fine and original poetic vein. The small-type additions and extensions, written on the principle that much that is required in such a manual may be better learned if presented to the eye in succinct and tabulated form than if woven into diffuse sentences in the main text, are a feature particularly worthy of notice. I know of no other manual containing within the same compass such a mass of minute and yet necessary information as that which Mr. Logie Robertson has crushed into the paragraphs of contemporary historical datings and references prefixed to the periods successively, and into the appended chronological lists of authors and of important books.

DAVID MASSON.



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# A HISTORY

OF

## ENGLISH LITERATURE

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LITERATURE is the artistic expression in words of what is thought, felt, remembered, or imagined. It deals primarily and mainly with poetry, history, and science or philosophy—a division of its subject-matter which corresponds with the three great powers or attitudes of the mind—imagination, memory, and reason. Books, whether in prose or verse, are its outward and familiar aspect; and an account of the contents, style, and authorship of the books of a nation may be regarded as a history of the literature of that nation.

The history of English literature begins with the arrival of the English in England in the middle of the fifth century, and continues almost uninterruptedly through more than fourteen centuries down to the present time. It is a remarkably brilliant record, quite capable of standing comparison with the history of the literature, however valuable, of any country of ancient or modern times. It has been marked by periods of unusually rich and varied development, and periods of rest and even apparent relapse; but, on the whole, it has been a stream of steady power and progression, and

still gives promise of unabated activity and growth. Specially grand results were attained towards the close of the sixteenth century and in the earlier half of the seventeenth, in the age of Spenser, Shakespeare, Bacon, and Milton ; and again towards the end of the eighteenth century and at the commencement of the nineteenth, in the age of Gibbon, Wordsworth, Scott, and Byron.

English literature has been extremely sensitive to the influences of political and social circumstances, and has been besides powerfully modified by international relationships, and by such achievements of human enterprise and skill as the invention of printing and the discovery of America. It reflects the character of the people as affected by permanent geographical and historical conditions—the conditions of scenery, climate, occupations, and mode of life, and the effects of wars, whether foreign, colonial, or domestic. It further reflects those fleeting phases of the national character which have now and again been produced by the transient influences of party, social and religious, and the changing mannerisms of fashionable life.

The history of English literature may conveniently be divided into six periods :

1. From 449 to 1066.
2. From 1066 to 1400.
3. From 1400 to 1580.
4. From 1580 to 1660.
5. From 1660 to 1789.
6. From 1789 to the present time.

## THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

THE Anglo-Saxons were the progenitors of the English nation. After their settlement in Britain they called themselves English, and the country they lived in England. They came from their original home in that part of the lowlands of Germany which stretches across the isthmus of Old Denmark from the Elbe mouth to the Baltic shore. They were a strong, daring, and masterful race of people, consisting of various tribes—Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, but all using the same Low German tongue, with dialectic differences. Though a home-loving people, they were habituated to strife both on land and sea, and even during the Roman occupation had made marauding descents upon Britain, and indeed seem to have planted a colony there to which Roman writers refer as the Saxon coast. After the Romans left, the British Celts, unable to repress a great irruption of the Gaels, also a Celtic people, whom the Romans had walled within the northern parts of the island, invited the co-operation of the Saxons to drive them back. The invitation was accepted, and the arrival of a powerful horde of Anglo-Saxons in 449 marks the commencement of English history.

“ Deep-blooming, strong,  
And yellow-hair’d, the blue-eyed Saxons came :  
They came, implored, but came with other aim  
Than to protect.”

They came to settle ; and invited in their turn their kinsmen of low Germany to aid them in securing and extending the settlements they at once began to make. They slew, or enslaved, or drove westward across the island the Britons

who had invited them, and whom they had the effrontery to call Welsh—that is, foreigners; and by the end of the sixth century had established themselves in the fairest parts of the south, centre, and east, from the Channel to the Firth of Forth. The lands thus appropriated they apportioned among themselves, and set up a confusion of rival states, bearing various names, from which, by-and-by, emerged the three leading kingdoms of Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex. A struggle for mastery ended in the supremacy of Wessex. Then began the Danish inroads and settlement, and afterwards came the great Norman invasion.

The Saxons were pagans when they came, and continued their pagan-worship of Woden and Thor for a century and a half after their coming. But they were neither without letters nor a literature, though they had hardly yet begun to commit their literature to the custody of letters. Their system of writing was by runes; it was by no means in common use, and there is no evidence that they employed it on paper or parchment. Christianity, which came to them from both north and south, from the Celtic Culdee missionaries and the Romish mission of Augustine, gave them, with other blessings, a knowledge of Roman characters and the art of literary writing. It was after they were Christianized that the traditional poems and poetic fragments which they brought in memory with them from the homeland in low Germany were first intrusted to the security of manuscript. And it is not only possible but probable that the early transcribers of that ancestral pagan literature took such liberties with the traditional text as Christianity and pride of kindred might suggest or seem to warrant. *Beowulf*, for example, our oldest English epic, composed, in all likelihood, in the fifth century, before our Saxon forefathers quitted their Continental home, was first written down from traditional record in Northumbria in the eighth century, and bears traces of Christian editing in the introduction here and there of a softer element that relieves the sternness of its pronounced paganism. Northumbria continued to be the seat and centre of letters, illustrious with the names of

Cædmon, Bede, and Cynewulf, till the storm of Danish barbarism in the ninth century quenched its lights, and literature fled southward to find a friend in Alfred, and a home in Wessex and Winchester. Danish blight again fell on English literature from 1013 to 1042, and it had hardly time to revive when the Normans came and repressed its growth for a century and a half.

The range is over six hundred and sixteen years, and extends from the arrival in Kent of a strong body of Jutes, under Hengist and Horsa, to the arrival in the same shire of a hostile force of Normans under William, afterwards known as The Conqueror. The following notes present in more detail an historical survey of the period :

**From 450 to about 600.**—Conquest of the Britons and seizure of their territory by the Jutes, Saxons, and Angles; paganism triumphant over Christianity. Arrival in Kent of the mission under St. Augustine (597).

**From about 600 to 835.**—Edwin of Northumbria accepts Christianity (627). Struggle for supremacy among the Anglo-Saxon kings; Edwin defeated by Penda of Mercia, and Northumbria thrown back for a while into paganism; Penda defeated (655), and downfall of paganism. In 664 the Synod of Whitby, by which the Church of England established on a Romish basis: Aidan and the Columban priests leave Northumbria. Rise of Wessex to supreme power under Egbert; Egbert first king of the English in 828.

**From 835 to 1066.**—Danish invasions (856 to 869)—Fife, Northumbria, East Anglia ravaged, and King Edmund killed. Reign of Alfred the Great (871-901). The Dane law defined in 878. After Alfred, the succession of English kings is as follows:

Edward "The Unconquered," 901-925.

Athelstan, 925-940. (His victory at Brunanburgh in 937.)

Edmund, 940-946.

Edred, 946-955. (Abbot Dunstan's power begins in this reign.)

Edwy, 955-957.

Edgar "The Peaceful," 958-975. (Dunstan's power equal to the king's.)

Edward "The Martyr," 975-978.

Ethelred "The Unready," 978-1016. (Great invasion of the Danes under Sweyn.)

Edmund Ironside, 1016.

Then came the Danish line :



Canute, Harold, and Hardicanute, from 1016 to 1042.

The crown was restored to English brows, and Edward the Confessor reigned from 1042 to 1066. In 1066 Harold was crowned, and slain at Hastings.

### INTRODUCTION

The Anglo-Saxon period in the history of English literature extends to more than six centuries—from 449 to 1066. It is longer than the interval between the age of Chaucer and the present time. When its duration is considered, it must be owned that its literary products will scarcely bear comparison, either in quantity or quality, with those of any of the subsequent periods. But Anglo-Saxon literature has a value of its own, and must always be of special interest as illustrative of the earliest attempts of the English language in the art of literary expression. It was no unworthy commencement of a great literature. At the same time it should be remembered that only a portion of the literature of the Anglo-Saxons has been published, that a large proportion still remains in manuscript, and that much of the original amount was lost in the time of the Danish inroads. Taking these circumstances into account, we must allow that the art of literature was by no means neglected in the Anglo-Saxon period, but, on the contrary, was diligently and largely cultivated. To this result the capabilities of the Anglo-Saxon tongue greatly contributed. Scholars go so far as to say that, relatively to the times, it was not a rude speech, but “probably the most disciplined of all the vernaculars of Western Europe, and certainly the most cultivated of all the dialects of the Gothic barbarians.”

Anglo-Saxon literature, as we now possess it, deals

mainly with historical and moral or religious subjects. At first the history is legendary, and largely blended with mythical creations; it is in verse, of unknown authorship and Continental origin, and more or less fragmentary. *Beowulf* is the longest and noblest specimen of this oldest English poetry, but along with it, and of a somewhat older date, must also be classed *The Traveller's Song*, *The Battle of Finnesburg*, and *The Song of Deor*. By-and-by, as the Anglo-Saxons identify themselves with their new settlements in England, and come under the civilizing influence of Christianity, the history becomes authentic, and, to a large extent, a record of passing events; it is chiefly, but not entirely, in prose, written by various hands, and emanating from the monasteries, or from the court of King Alfred. *The Saxon Chronicle* is the most notable specimen of native English literary history of the Anglo-Saxon period; it includes such excellent examples of historical verse as *The Battle of Brunanburgh* (937) and *The Battle of Maldon* (993). The narrative of the Danish wars is from King Alfred's pen, and is the most important piece of Old English prose we possess. To the same class of literature as *The Saxon Chronicle* belongs a great mass of historical translations in prose, made during the two centuries at the close of the Anglo-Saxon period. Of these may be mentioned Alfred's version of Orosius's *History of the World*, and his translation of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*.

Coming next to Anglo-Saxon writings on moral or religious subjects, we have to notice, as first in time (670) and first in merit, Cædmon's *Song of Creation*. "Others after him began to make religious poems," says Bede in Latin, "but none could rival him, for he learned the craft of poetry not of man, but of God." He paraphrased

into verse the whole Scripture narrative. Cynewulf was his poetical successor a century later, and wrote, besides secular poems of great power and beauty, *The Helene* (or Finding of the Cross), *The Christ*, and probably *The Andreas*—a sacred epic on the adventures of St. Andrew. King Alfred and Archbishop Alfric made large contributions in prose to the moral and sacred literature of the period. The former translated Boëthius's *Consolation of Philosophy* and Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Cure*; while the latter wrote Homilies and Lives of the Saints, and was a large translator of the Old Testament. Wulfstan (Archbishop of York from 1002 to 1023) also wrote Homilies; and his spirited *Address to the English* is specially noteworthy. Bede should also be mentioned in this connection for a vernacular version (735) of the Gospel of John, though it has unhappily perished. He wrote his other books, to the number of forty-four, in Latin prose. It is to Alfred that the honor belongs of having created English prose. There exists no English prose of earlier date than his. His design was the noble one of throwing open to his people in their own tongue the knowledge which, till then, was accessible only to the clergy. For that purpose he translated and edited many and various books, and wrote up *The Saxon Chronicle*. He was school-master as well as king to his people.

### *The Saga of Beowulf*

It is a story of old Scandinavian life and pagan heroism. The scene is in Zealand and Gothland, and the Baltic Sound that separates them. In Zealand for many years had reigned King Hrothgar. Successful in battle, and rich with the spoils of war, he founded Heorot, a magnificent hall, for the entertainment of his thanes. Here he and his braves nightly feasted and slept. But the hall was built on the edge of

a moor that was haunted by a huge grim monster, Grendel by name. Alone with his malignant monster-mother he dwelt, joy-hating and divided from joy. The lights and festive sounds of Heorot, streaming out by night over the waste moorland, annoy him, and he approaches the hall to reconnoitre. Watching his opportunity, he enters stealthily when the revellers are asleep and the lights are low, and, seizing thirty men, hurries off with his victims into the darkness. At dawn there is woe in the hall of Heorot.

For twelve long years the monster continues his nightly ravages, till Heorot stands almost empty, and Hrothgar is pitied far and wide. Wandering scalds carry the tidings everywhere.

At the court of Hygelac, in Gothland, young Beowulf, the king's kinsman, first heard of Grendel. Now Beowulf was the most daring Viking of his age, and the force of thirty heroes was in his hand-grip. No enterprise was too arduous for him; he would go to Heorot, and offer his services to Hrothgar, and do battle with the Grendel. Choosing fifteen comrades, he launches his long galley on the Sound, and rowing all that day and all night, descries at early dawn of the second day the glistening cliffs of Zealand. The warder of the coast hails the young sea-rovers as they land, and demands their errand. He conducts them, not without suspicion of their warlike array, to Heorot. At the door of the hall they lay down their shields and mail-shirts and javelins, and wearing only their towering helmets—crested with the image of a boar in gold—are led by Wolfgar, the steward of Heorot, into the presence of Hrothgar, and tell their story. Hrothgar is old and bald, but at the sight of heroic youth reckless of danger he grows young again. He remembers, with a warrior's respect, the father of Beowulf, and willingly accepts the services of that father's son. The night is devoted to feasting; and Beowulf, flushed with mead, boasts of his past achievements. A young Dane twits him with his failure in a five days' swimming-match in the open sea. Beowulf taunts the young Dane with his fear of the Grendel. Hrothgar laughs with

glee at the rivalry of the young warriors. But it is late, and the hour of Grendel's visit approaches. The company retire to rest, and are soon asleep—all but Beowulf. He sits withdrawn among the shadows, recalling his pledges and meditating the method of his attack.

Over the moor through the mist comes Grendel striding. He bursts open the hall door with his hands, and with flashing eyes surveys the sleepers. He laughs in horrid delight. In a moment he has seized the nearest, bit through his body, drunk his blood, and devoured him. He is already gloating over a second victim when Beowulf grips his right arm. The suddenness, but especially the strength of the grip, startles the monster. He turns on his assailant, but his assailant holds the grip. A fearful struggle ensues. Benches are overturned; the hall is shaken; the sleepers in the sides of the hall sit up, terrified on-lookers. This way and that way Beowulf and the Grendel plunge and sway, locked in deadly embrace. The monster would gladly flee, but Beowulf holds the grip. The monster shrieks, tugs amain, and with one mighty collected effort is free. But at what cost! His hand, arm, and shoulder—his severed and bleeding limb—is left in the grip of Beowulf!

At earliest dawn Beowulf and his comrades trace the fatal bloodmarks over the moor to the edge of a mere, the waters of which are surging red! It is with the blood of the Grendel! They return with the joyful news to Heorot, and the day is given up to rejoicing and the night to revelry. The Grendel's arm attracts crowds, who come to see it from far and near. The queen and her timid maidens look on it and shudder. Beowulf is fêted, and rewarded with horses and harness, and celebrated in a saga, which is chanted in his ears that night. They all retire to rest with no fear of Grendel.

At dead of night the monster-mother of Grendel invades the hall, and, snatching up the arm of her son and one noblethane, victim to her vengeance, rouses the sleepers, and rushes off into the darkness. Beowulf vows her death; and next day, scouring the moor on horseback, they for the first

time take notice of its desolate features. What monsters more may it not contain?

It is a waste of windy crags and gorges where the wolf lurks; of misty marshes and stagnant pools, swarming with serpents and dragons; of brawling streams, tumbling from the clouds over cliffs and flooding the hollows; there are shaggy woods, and strange fires dance on the lock waters. Though the moor-wanderer, the tall stag, hotly pursued from afar by the hounds, were to make for these shaggy woods, yet would he pause on nearer view of their forbidding aspect, and rather yield his life than enter their recesses in the hope of shelter. Rather would he die of thirst on the bank of that ghastly lake than stoop his head to drink of its waters.

Beowulf and his comrades come again to the central mere. It is still red with gore; and, to their horror, there is the head of their comrade, the victim of the preceding night, floating ashore! And now they see demons lying in the clefts of the surrounding rocks. One of them Beowulf shoots with an arrow; then, sounding a war-blast on his horn, at the sound of which the demons hurry from sight, the mailed hero grasps his good sword Hrunting, dives in the deep water, and disappears!

For a whole day he continued sinking. The mere-monster, wolf and woman both, Grendel's mother, clutched him ere his feet touched bottom, and bore him to her vast den. A dreadful struggle took place here. Beowulf's sword was powerless against the monster; only with his hand-grip could he hold her. He caught up a huge bill, an old sword of the giants', and smote her with it. It was her death-stroke! Looking round him he saw the lifeless body of the Grendel. With the giants' sword he severed the head; hot blood welled up, melting with its heat the sword-blade, and leaving only the hilt in Beowulf's hand! With the hilt and the two heads, regardless of the wealth in the monster's den, he rose through the mere and reached the surface. His companions, seeing the mere reddened with more blood, had given him up for lost. Great was their joy when they helped him



ashore. Four of them carried, and scarcely carried, the head of the monster on a stake to Heorot. "Now," said Beowulf, to Hrothgar, "now may'st thou and thy warriors sleep in Heorot free of care." There was feasting again that night. And next morning Beowulf and his brave band, laden with presents, raised sail and passed over sea to their Gothland home.

Beowulf became king of Gothland, and reigned—a brave and blameless ruler—fifty years. His last exploit was to choke with his terrible grip and slay a fire-dragon, fifty feet long, who wasted his land and guarded a treasure in a cavern. But in the encounter the breath of the monster burned and poisoned him too severely for recovery. On Hronesness, a high sea-cape commanding a far view, his sorrowing people built a pile of pine-logs, hung it round with shields and arms, and laid the body of their lord atop; they then set the wood on fire. And thus, as he had ordered, the earthly image of Beowulf passed from the eyes of men.

Such is a rapid outline of the *Saga of Beowulf*, the first long poem in the English language. If it be claimed for *The Saxon Chronicle* that it is the earliest and most venerable monument of Teutonic prose, not less justly may the claim be made for *Beowulf* that it is the earliest and most valuable monument of Teutonic verse. Its poetical beauties are not its only merit: it is of great historical value, showing familiarly and minutely the whole manners and customs and mode of life of our pagan ancestors. The events of one entire day are successively recorded. The style of the verse is terse and straightforward, well adapted for the rapid narration of action, but not without that kind of repetition known as parallelism; there are few similes—only five in all—and not many metaphors, but compound words are common—*e.g.*, "swan-road" for "water," "heath-stalker" for "stag," "bone-case" for "ribs," etc. The verse itself is peculiar, and, though long disused in our literature, was popular for many centuries. It was still the popular form of poetry in the middle of the fourteenth century, when Langland wrote his *Vision*. The last effective use of it was made by the

Scottish poet, William Dunbar, at the very close of the fifteenth century. Saxon alliterative verse, as it is called, takes account of neither metre nor rhyme. It is built on a principle of accent and alliteration. Each verse falls into two parts as if corresponding to the forward and backward movement of a rower; there are usually two accented syllables in each part, placed naturally on the important words, and the first three usually begin with the same letter, or at least express the same sound. Here is a specimen which exemplifies the general rule:

“Hie dígel lond  
warigeath, wulfhleothu, windige næssas,  
fréne fenngelád, thær firgenstreám  
under næssa genipu nither gewíteth,  
flód under foldan.”

(They keep their country secret, their wolf-slopes, windy peaks, dangerous marsh-paths, where the mountain torrent from under the hill-mists descends, flooding the lowlands.)

### *Cædmon*

The classical English story which tells how **Cædmon** came to write verses was taken by King Alfred from the Latin of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. Bede was a young child-scholar at Jarrow-on-Tyne when Cædmon died at Whitby in 680. The story goes very much in this way: He was a layman till of advanced age, and had never learned to sing; and on that account, when at festive times the harp was passed from hand to hand till each had sung for the entertainment of the rest, Cædmon would rise, when it was coming near his turn, and steal away home quite ashamed of himself. On one of those occasions, happening to have charge of the cattle that same night, he withdrew to the cattle-stalls, and having seen that everything was safe, threw himself down on some straw and fell asleep. He had been sleeping some time when he was aware of a man in a vision standing near him, who, after salutation, spoke to him, calling him by his name. “Cædmon,” he said, “sing me something.” “Me!”

said Cædmon at once, but very humbly; "there's nothing that I can sing: that was why I left the company and came here—just because I could not sing." Presently the vision spoke again: "But will you not try if I ask you?" Cædmon pondered a moment, and then asked in a low tone, "What shall I sing?" "Sing the glory of creation," promptly returned the voice. On receiving the answer he at once began to sing, in praise of the Creator, words and verses he had never before heard, exactly as they are set down here:

Nú wé sceolon hērian  
heofonríces Weard

Metodes mihte  
and his móðgethōnc,  
wera Wuldorfæder;  
swá hé wundra gehwæs,  
éce Dryhten,  
ord onstealde.  
Hé ærest gesceóp  
eorþan bearnum  
heofon tó hrófe  
hálig scippend;  
þa middangeard,  
mōncynnes Weard,  
éce Dryhten,  
æfter teóde  
firum foldan,  
Freá Ælmihtig.

Now shall we praise  
The guardian of the heavenly  
kingdom,  
The power of the Creator  
And his wise design,  
The glorious Father of men;  
How he of all wonders,  
The everlasting lord,  
Made a beginning.  
He first created  
Earth for the children of men,  
Heaven for a roof—  
The holy Creator;  
And the earth after—  
He the protector of mankind,  
The eternal Father,  
Created next  
The earth for men,  
Ruler Almighty.

When he arose in the morning he could recall the dream and repeat the song, and even continue it. He went at once to his superior, the farm bailiff, and told him that during the night he had mysteriously received the gift of song. The bailiff took him to the Abbess Hild, who, on hearing what had happened to the cattleman, summoned the most learned of the monks to consider the matter. They agreed that the heavenly gift had been given him by God himself. Then they translated for him a part of the Holy Writ, and bade him put it into verse if he could. He retired to his house,

and next morning returned with a set of excellent verses. Then the abbess owned and rejoiced at God's gift in the man, and at her advice Cædmon abandoned the world and became a monk. And now in the quiet scriptorium of Whitby Abbey, with light from the sea-sky falling on the parchment as he wrote, the monk continued and completed what the cattleman had begun. He sang first of the shaping of the world and the making of man, and the whole story of Genesis; of the outgoing of Israel from Egypt land to their ingoing into the land of Promise; then he sang of the human nativity of God, His earthly pangs and passion, and His glorious uprising. Much, too, he sang of the final doom, the fear of hell, and the sweet hopes of heaven.

Cædmon, from his name, was of Celtic birth. His *Song of Creation* belongs to the year 670. It is in Anglo-Saxon alliterative verse—no other kind was then or for long after known in England; and in some passages—notably in the fall of the rebel angels and the angry cry of Satan from hell—it anticipates something of the design, and even something of the sublime passion, of Milton's great epic. Cædmon's poems remained in MS. till the year 1655, when they were printed for the first time, and may therefore have come under the notice of Milton.

### *King Alfred and The Saxon Chronicle*

**Alfred** (849–901) is well called The Great, since no king on the roll of English history lived and labored so truly for the good of his people in every way. He was born at Wantage in Berkshire, the fifth son of Ethelwulf, King of the West Saxons. At the tender age of four he was taken to Rome, where he stayed three years, and was adopted by the Pope (Leo IV.) as his "bishop son." An anecdote of his twelfth year is worth recording: Osburh, his mother, showed her sons a volume of verse with a beautifully painted initial letter, and promised the book to whichever of them should first learn to read it. It was Alfred that won the prize. In 871 Wessex was invaded for the first time by the Danes.

Alfred was present at the battle of Ashdown, where he distinguished himself by his bravery, and he was in consequence elected king. It was no mere honor: he fought nine battles against the Danes that same year, but was forced to compound with them at last, and there was peace for a while. War broke out again, and Alfred became a fugitive, while Guthrun ravaged his country. It is to this time of his eventful life that the story of the burnt cakes belongs. Presently, sustained by an indomitable patience and courage, he fought his way to success, and made terms with the Danes, by which Watling Street was made the limit of their settlement. His great work as a ruler was to make England a united nation against Danish aggression. Never was more industrious a man than Alfred. In spite of recurring illness he managed by a systematic economy of time to have something useful to occupy his attention for every waking hour of his life. He built up a code of wise laws, taking for its basis the Ten Commandments. He founded schools, and himself taught in them; he founded two monasteries, which were to his time what universities are to ours; he translated and edited with his own pen the best Latin works on religion, history, and science; and he invited scholars like John the Scot, and voyagers like Othere, that their knowledge might be available for his people. He gave England what no other king ever gave his country—a history of the nation in the national tongue. This was *The Saxon Chronicle*. It was the work of various pens, but Alfred was the moving spirit. He wrote in it a narrative of his own wars with the Danes, and he gathered for it from the monasteries the annals and traditions of the past from 60 B.C., and brought it down to 891. It went on after his death—latterly with less fulness and accuracy—down to 1154, the date of Stephen's death; and there it stops.

His translations include Boëthius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, and Orosius's *History and Geography of the World*—all made between 887 and 893; and Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Cure*, made between 897 and the year of his death. But for Alfred literature might

have died out in England, for it had been driven from Northumbria (its only seat at that time) by the Danes when Alfred came to the throne, and it was he who gave it a shelter and popularized it in Wessex. (See his Preface to Gregory's *Pastoral* for the state of learning when he became king.)

### *Bede*

**Bæda** (673–735) or **Bede**—named the Venerable—spent all his life in St. Paul's monastery at Jarrow-on-Tyne, which he entered an orphan of seven. He was the greatest scholar of his day in every available language and branch of knowledge, and all his desire was, like Chaucer's clerk, to learn and to teach. He found many to teach among the six hundred monks of his own and the neighboring monastery of St. Peter's at Wearmouth. He compiled, or composed, or translated forty-four books in Latin, notably his *Ecclesiastical History* of our Island and People, and had just finished a version of St. John's Gospel in English when he died. His pupil St. Cuthbert tells the affecting story: During April and May of 735 he suffered from asthma, but in spite of his ill-health he worked on, that he might complete his English translation of John's Gospel. On May 26 only one scribe was with him, the rest being gone to the festival of the Ascension. "Dear master," said the boy, "there is yet one chapter, and it is painful for thee to dictate." "It is quite easy," replied the venerable old man; "only write quickly." And thus they continued working the whole day. When daylight was fading—"There is only one sentence now to write, dear master," said the boy. "Write it quickly," said the old man, speaking with difficulty. "At last it is finished," said the boy. "You speak truth indeed," said the old man; "it is finished—all is finished now." He slipped on the floor; the young scholar knelt beside him and tenderly supported his head. And in this posture, with the words "Glory to God" on his lips, Bæda the Venerable expired.



## A VIEW OF ANGLO-SAXON LITERATURE

*I.—Of Continental Origin*

Song of the Traveller (written early in 5th century).

The Complaint of Deor.

The Fight at Finnesburg (referred to in Beowulf).

Waldhere (fragmentary, like preceding).

Beowulf (a long pagan epic of the first half of the 5th century, slightly altered and edited by an English monk of the 8th).

*II.—Of English Origin*

Cædmon's Song of Creation (*circ.* 670, the first English poem written in England: *loc.* Whitby).

Exeter Book and Vercelli Book (collections of religious verse mainly, and so named from the places where the MSS. are preserved: Vercelli is in Northern Italy, about forty miles from Milan; its cathedral library is rich in MSS.).

Sacred Songs by Ealdhelm, Abbot of Malmesbury (written at end of 7th century, *loc.* South, and very popular in Alfred's time—the English songs all lost).

Judith—an unassigned fragment, consisting of three books describing the Death of Holofernes: rather a war poem than a religious poem; *loc.* North of England.

Bæda (673-735) wrote some forty-four books in Latin: his Ecclesiastical History (731). An English translation of John's Gospel, lost.

Secular and sacred poems by Cynewulf, a sceop or minstrel at the court of some Northumbrian king: *temp.* 8th century. His secular poems, written in youth, include The Wanderer, The Seafarer, The Wife's Complaint, The Ruin, and numerous Riddles; his religious poetry includes The Dream of the Rood (it is a fragment of this poem which is inscribed on the Ruthwell Cross in Dumfriesshire), containing the story of his conversion, a kind of prologue to his Helene, or Finding of the Cross; The Christ; The Passion of St. Juliana; perhaps The Phœnix, and The Andreas. These are preserved in the Exeter and Vercelli Books.

The Saxon Chronicle, *circ.* 800; revised and extended backward to Hengist, at Winchester, *circ.* 850-60.

King Alfred's English translations of Orosius, Bæda's Ecclesiastical History, Boëthius's Consolation of Philosophy, and Gregory's Pastoral Cure. In his time The Saxon Chronicle was

carried back to 60 B.C., and on to 891. The narrative of the wars with the Danes is from Alfred's own pen: it is the most important piece of Anglo-Saxon prose extant.

Song of the Battle of Brunanburgh (*temp.* 937—*loc.* South of England) is one of the verse parts of The Saxon Chronicle: it describes King Athelstan's battle with Anlaf the Dane.

Song of the Battle of Maldon (*temp.* 993—*loc.* South of England; the language is late West Saxon); it describes fighting in Northumberland against the Danes, and the death of Earl Brihtnoth. It too is part of the Chronicle under the year 993.

Alfric's translations of Old Testament historical books, Homilies, and Colloquy (the last-mentioned the first English-Latin dictionary, or rather reading-book, with amusing descriptions of the life of ploughmen, students, etc.), *circ.* 990-94.

Wulfstan's Homilies, *circ.* 1015; also his spirited Address to the English.

## 1066 - 1400

### FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST TO THE DEATH OF CHAUCER

THE range is over three hundred and thirty-four years, and extends, in English political history, from the beginning of the Norman line of kings all through the dynasty onward, in the Plantagenet line, to the accession of the house of Lancaster. The order of kings is as follows: **NORMANS**—William I., William II., Henry I., and Stephen; **PLANTAGENETS**—Henry II., Richard I., John, Henry III., Edward I., Edward II., Edward III., and Richard II. The last-named sovereign, deposed in 1399, was in that year succeeded by Henry IV., the first of the Lancastrians. The chief events of English history, affecting more or less the literary production of the period, are here presented as they occurred in the successive reigns.

**Reign of William I., 1066-1087.**—The Conquest completed by the defeat of the English, though aided by Sweyn of Denmark, in the north, and the defeat of Hereward the Wake in the marshes of Ely. Remodelling of the Church, and establishment of the feudal system; papal encroachments resisted, and checks placed on the power of the nobles.

**Reign of William II., 1087-1100.**—Tyranny of the king in both Church and State; the danegeld increased, the forest laws cruelly enforced, appropriation of the revenues of bishoprics, etc. The First Crusade. Invasion of England by Malcolm III., twice unsuccessful, the second time Malcolm (in 1093) slain at Alnwick, and Scotland acknowledged by Edgar to be an English fief.

**Reign of Henry I., 1100-1135.**—The king's marriage with Matilda of Scotland (1100); the tyranny of the last reign checked, and justice administered in Church and State. Invasion of Normandy and captivity of Robert. Struggle against Pope maintained. Loss at sea, in the White Ship, of Prince William (1120); alle-

giance promised to the king's daughter, Empress Matilda (afterwards married to Geoffrey Plantagenet of Anjou).

**Reign of Stephen, 1135–1154.**—Civil war between the supporters of Stephen and Matilda's party; David of Scotland defeated at Northallerton (1138). Arrival of Matilda, and her son Henry acknowledged to be Stephen's heir.

**Reign of Henry II., 1154–1189.**—Struggle against papal encroachments continued; the constitutions of Clarendon enforced; murder of Becket (1170). Conquest of Ireland (1172). Revolt of the king's sons, and rebellion of his French vassals—suppressed; revolt of English barons—suppressed; William the Lion of Scotland pays homage (1174). Sudden downfall of the king.

Scutage, a serious blow to feudalism, was instituted in this reign.

**Richard I., 1189–1199.**—Crusade and period of his imprisonment (1189–1194). War with France (1194–1199.) William the Lion bought back his independence.

**John, 1199–1216.**—His succession disputed; Prince Arthur's murder; loss of French provinces. Quarrel with Pope about a successor to the see of Canterbury; John excommunicated (1209). His abject submission (1213) to Rome. Revolt of his barons; Magna Charta granted (1215). Civil war; invasion by the French.

**Henry III., 1216–1272.**—French invaders driven back, and England kept for the English. Arrival in England of Franciscan and Dominican friars. The Mad Parliament; the Provisions of Oxford; Simon de Montfort's Parliament (in which the burghs were represented); defeat and death of De Montfort at Evesham (1265).

**Edward I., 1272–1307.**—Wales conquered 1277, and finally in 1283. Invasion and partial conquest of Scotland; Wallace executed in 1305. Revolt of Scots under Bruce (1306).

**Edward II., 1307–1327.**—Struggle of king and his favorite, Piers de Gaveston, against the barons. Battle of Bannockburn (in 1314); Scotland free. The Queen Isabella, with Mortimer and the barons, compel the king's abdication; his murder in Berkeley Keep.

**Edward III., 1327–1377.**—Treaty of Northampton recognizing Scottish independence (1328). Sudden overthrow of the government of queen-mother and Mortimer (1330). Defeat of Scots at Halidon Hill (1333). Commencement of the Hundred Years' War with France (1338); Cressy (1346); Poitiers (won by the Black Prince, 1356). The Black Death (1348); the oppressive Statute of Laborers (1349). The Good Parliament of 1376. Lollardism.

**Richard II., 1377–1399.**—The Peasants' Revolt (1381). Richard's favoritism; strife with the barons; his abdication; his death at Pontefract Castle (1400).

The succession of Scottish sovereigns for the same period was

as follows : Malcolm III. (Canmore), 1057-1093 ; Donaldbain, 1093-1094 ; Duncan II., 1094-1095 ; Donaldbain restored, 1095-1097 ; Edgar, 1097-1107 ; Alexander I., 1107-1124 ; David I., 1124-1153 ; Malcolm IV., 1153-1165 ; William I. (The Lion), 1165-1214 ; Alexander II., 1214-1249 ; Alexander III., 1249-1286 ; Margaret (the Maid of Norway), 1286-1290 ; John (Baliol), 1292-1296. An interregnum for ten years. Robert I. (Bruce), 1306-1329 ; David II., 1329-1371 ; Robert II., 1371-1390 ; Robert III., 1390-1406. The only noteworthy Scottish literature of this period — Barbour's *Brus*, Wyntoun's *Cronykil*, and old ballads—deals with the strife and struggle which almost continuously agitated the country. The strife was with England, and, though sometimes aggressive, as shown in the preceding abstract of English history, was in the main a struggle for independence.

### INTRODUCTION

The long struggle between the Anglo-Saxon or English and Anglo-Norman or French languages, which began shortly after the Conquest in 1066, ended at last in favor of the native tongue. French was absorbed. But till the absorption little was produced in English that possessed any literary merit at all. There was only the continuation of *The Saxon Chronicle* till 1154, followed half a century later by Layamon's *Brut*. There was, however, a large body of Latin and French literature, written by monkish chroniclers and romancing *trouvours*. Chief among the Latin writers were William of Malmesbury, Geoffrey of Monmouth, Henry of Huntingdon, and Giraldus Cambrensis, all monkish chroniclers ; Nicholas Breakspear, the only Englishman that has worn the papal tiara, Thomas à Becket, Robert Grosstête, and Matthew Paris, all writers on theological or ecclesiastical subjects ; and Michael Scott, Roger Bacon, and John Duns Scotus, philosophical or scholastic writers. The French writers include King Henry I., surnamed Beauclerc ; Wace, who translated from

the Latin of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and was himself translated into English by Layamon; and Walter Map or Mapes, the friend and councillor of Henry II., who wrote, besides, Latin legends of King Arthur, and blent them with the doctrines of Christianity by inventing and adding the story of *The Holy Grail*. Numerous French *fabliaux* and cycles of romances from abroad were also circulating in the country, many of which were rendered into English in the reigns of the first three Edwards. Popular subjects of those romances were the legends of Arthur, Charlemagne, and Alexander the Great, and the histories and traditions of Richard of the Lion Heart, Robert of Sicily, Sir Guy of Warwick, and Sir Bevis of Southampton.

Three centuries after the Norman Conquest, English, considerably modified in the interval, was once more the speech of a united nation. The Normans found they had to adopt the language of the majority. In 1350 English was used in the schools; and in 1362 it was enacted by Edward III. that both French and Latin must give place to English in the courts of law. From the date of that enactment English literature, as we understand the word, had a chance, and was both able and swift to take it. Chaucer was then in his twenty-second year; Langland, Barbour, Gower, and Wyclif were middle-aged men, with their literary work still before them.

In this period end-rhymes, introduced from France, began to supersede Anglo-Saxon alliterative verse, and took a permanent place in the history of English poetry.

The effect of the Norman Conquest upon English was to simplify the grammar and increase the vocabulary, and enrich the literature of the nation with many a song and story.



## A GENERAL VIEW OF THE LITERATURE OF THE PERIOD,

1. The Saxon Chronicle is continued, and ends abruptly in 1154 with the death of Stephen. With it died Anglo-Saxon poetry and Anglo-Saxon prose.
2. Religious Poetry, begun in Anglo-Saxon times by Cædmon, continues :
  - (a) Orm's Ormulum, *circ.* 1215, a metrical version in pure English of the daily service of the church, with a homily in verse added.
  - (b) The Ancren Riwele (Rule of the Anchoresses), *circ.* 1220, continues the Ormulum.
  - (c) Lives of the Saints, *circ.* 1300, translated from Latin or French into English verse.
  - (d) Handlyng Synne (or Manual of Sins), 1303, from the French, by Robert Manning of Brunne.
  - (e) Cursor Mundi, *circ.* 1320, a metrical version of the Scriptures, with legends of the Saints.
3. Historical and Narrative Poetry.

(The Ayenbite of Inwyte, Remorse of Conscience, 1340, a translation in prose from the French.)

(f) The Pricke of Conscience, *circ.* 1340, in Latin, but also in Northern English, by Richard Rolle of Hampole.

(g) Piers Plowman, 1362, by William Langley or Langland.

(The prose histories were written in Latin; were mere annals at first, written by the chroniclers in isolated monasteries, till a more competent class of men arose who lived at the court. Of these later historians the first is William of Malmesbury, whose book comes down to 1142; and among the last is Matthew of Paris, who lived in the latter part of the thirteenth century.)

Geoffrey of Monmouth's twelve short books of Romance, "playfully called history," put forth as a Latin translation from the original Welsh in 1147. Extremely popular (except among the real historians), it got into French, was added to and embellished in France, and came back as the work of Wace, with the title of *The Brut*, in 1155. From Wace's French, Layamon, an English priest in Worcestershire, translated it into English verse, and Layamon's *Brut* (1205) is our first great English poem after the Conquest.

Romances popularized from the French :

- (a) King Arthur and the Round Table, introduced in Latin by Geoffrey of Monmouth; continued also in Latin by Walter Map, who added the Quest of the Grail and the *Morte d'Arthur*. These Arthurian stories were all versified

into English, and extremely popular before the end of the thirteenth century.

(b) Charlemagne and the douzy peers ;

(c) Life of Alexander ;

(d) Siege of Troy—all well known by the time of Chaucer.

Lyrics : Ballads of Robin Hood ; Owl and Nightingale ; and Laurence Minot's Songs (1352) of the great battles of Edward III.

4. Sir John Mandeville : Travels. Englished after 1356.

5. John Wyclif's Translation of the Bible, in 1383. Fixed a standard English.

6. John Gower : Fifty Balades, in the French style, on love ; Speculum Meditantis (in French), Vox Clamantis (in Latin), Confessio Amantis, 1393 (in English).

7. Chaucer, 1340–1400.

#### PRINCIPAL AUTHORS

I. *Poets*.—WILLIAM LANGLAND, JOHN BARBOUR, JOHN GOWER, GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

*Others*.—LAYAMON, ORM, THOMAS THE RHYMER, etc.

II. *Prose Writers*.—SIR JOHN MANDEVILLE, JOHN WYCLIF.

#### POETS

The four chief poets of this period all died about the same time. The active part of their lives belongs to the latter half of the fourteenth century. **William Langland** (1320?–1400?) was not the least popular and influential of the four. He was born at Cleobury Mortimer, near the Malvern Hills, in Shropshire, where he received his education, and took minor orders as a clerk or secular priest. He was in London, and resident at Cornhill, while still a young man, and maintained himself and his wife and daughter by chanting dirges and *placebos* at the funerals of the rich. We know more of his personality than of the outward facts of his life. He makes occasional reference to himself in his poem, from which we learn that he was a tall, stiff, taciturn man, utterly discontented with the existing state of society, and despondent of improvement or reform. Long Will the people called him, and they thought

he was next thing to being mad. He stalked along Cheap-side in silent indignation at the pride of wealth, or in silent sorrow at the miseries of the destitute. The contrast between riches and poverty oppressed him, and he was ill inclined to salute the grand lords and dames who rode past him decked with silver and miniver. He resembles most one of the stern Hebrew prophets, whose mission it was to warn and denounce. A poor man himself, he is the poet of the poor. His subject is Piers Plowman, the representative name of the simple, honest, hard-working English peasant of the time. *The Vision of Piers Plowman* is the title of his long poem, or rather series of poems. It runs to seven thousand five hundred long lines of alliterative verse of the ancient Anglo-Saxon structure—a measure which was still more familiar to the public ear in the fourteenth century than the measure of the French rhymed romances. The poem takes the popular form of just such an allegorical dream as afterwards visited the imaginary slumbers of Bunyan in Bedford jail. Langland describes himself as weary with wandering, and falling asleep by the side of a brook to the lullaby of the water. The material circumstances in which he falls asleep are in strange contrast to the world of his tumultuous dream. It is a May morning, and sunshine is falling soft on the green slopes and glancing streams of Malvern. Pastoral peace surrounds the unconscious sleeper. He dreams that he is in an unknown wilderness. Far to the east is the wonderful Tower of Truth, illumined with its own light; on the other side is a deep dark valley with a dungeon—the abode of death and demons; and the busy world of men, like a great Vanity Fair, stands between. The field of his vision is full of folk, “of all manner of men, the mean and the rich, working and wandering as the world asketh.” Here are honest peasants swinking among the furrows, behind the plough, or bearing the seed-sheet. To them comes no holiday, and the fruit of all their toil is wasted by gluttonous idlers. There are the motley crowds of idlers: rich people in their fine apparel; chaffering merchants and wandering minstrels—“Judas’s children”; pilgrims and palmers,

loath to work, and licensed to wander and tell lies all their lifetime; sturdy beggars with well-fed bodies and well-filled bags; lawyers, and ale-drappers, and sellers of indulgences. From this general description the dream wanders away into episodes, which become confusing from want of development or want of coherence. One fine episode presents Reason preaching to the crowd, and describes the conversion of the Seven Deadly Sins; another shows Piers Plowman guiding the multitude in the direction of Truth. Here and there are descriptions of the dreadful ravages caused by the famines and pestilences of those far-off insanitary times, and incidental pictures of rustic life in croft and village both in times of plenty and times of want. The scenes are not without touches of Hogarthian humor, and there is a feeling for nature and beauty; but the poem as a whole is bitterly satirical or gloomily religious. It is an allegorical satire exposing the corruption of the State, the Church, and society. Viewed in another aspect, it is a Pilgrim's Progress in search of Truth. It was apparently Langland's life-work, and was altered and added to oftener than once. The earliest text is of date 1362, a second appeared about 1377, and the third about 1390.

“Now 'ginneth the Glutton for to go to shrift,  
And carrieth him churchward his shrift for to tell.  
Then Betty the brewster bade him ‘Good-morrow!’  
And then she asked of him ‘whither that he would?’  
‘To holy church,’ quo'd he, ‘for to hear mass,  
And then I shall be shriven and sin no more.’  
‘I have good ale, gossip,’ quo'd she; ‘Glutton, wilt thou try it?’  
‘Hast thou ought in thy pouch?’ quo'd he; ‘any hot spices?’  
‘Yea, Glutton, gossip,’ quo'd she; ‘God wot, full good;  
I have pepper, and peony seed, and a pound of garlick,  
And a farthingworth of fennel seed for these fasting days.’  
Then goeth Glutton in; and great oaths after!  
Cicely the soutar's wife sat on the bench,  
Watty the warrener, and his wife both,  
Tomkin the tinker, and twain of his knaves,  
Hiccon the hackney-man, and Hugo the needler,  
Clarissa of Cock's Lane, and the clerk of the church,  
Davy the Dyker, and a dozen others.

They greeted Sir Glutton with a gallon of ale ;  
 There was laughing, and chaffing, and 'Let it go round !'  
 Bargains and beverages began to arise ;  
 They sat-so till evensong, and sang for some while,  
 Till Glutton had gulped down the gallon and a gill.

And after all this surfeit an illness he had,  
 And slept Saturday and Sunday till the sun went to rest.  
 Then he waked of his wink, and, wiping his eyes,  
 The first word that he spake was 'where is the cup ?'  
 His wife warned him then of his wickedness and sin ;  
 Then was he ashamed, and swore, and scratched ears,  
 And began to groan grimly, and great ado made  
 For the wicked life he had been living.  
 'For hunger or for thirst I make mine avow  
 Never shall fish on Fridays my stomach defy  
 Ere mine aunt Abstinence shall have given leave ;  
 And yet I have hated her all my lifetime !'

—*Passus V.* (modernized).

**John Barbour** (1320?–1395) had something of the skill in narrative, the combined simplicity and terseness, of his great contemporary Chaucer ; and, like Chaucer, he is sometimes spoken of as the father of his country's verse. Famous as the author of *The Bruce*, little more is known of him except that he filled the office of Archdeacon of Aberdeen from 1357 onward to the time of his death, that he had occasional free passes to the University of Oxford from the King of England, and that he was in receipt of several small pensions from David II. and Robert II., the son and grandson respectively of the hero whom his poem commemorates. The whole poem is charged with patriotic sentiment, and the sentiment is often expressed with a fervor of utterance that stamps it at once as genuine. The noble and well-known apostrophe to Freedom is such an utterance. The poem has other than poetical merits : it is of great historical value. Barbour may have been born so recently as six years after the great Scottish victory at Bannockburn ; it was extremely probable that he had conversed with eye-witnesses of that memorable battle, and even with men who had taken part in it and in the long struggle for national liberty which led up to it. His descriptions have therefore the vigor and

boldness, and minuteness of detail, which come from fulness and freshness of knowledge. The poem is a rhymed epic on the significant events and important persons in Scottish history between 1306 and 1322, and was completed about the year 1376. The measure is the octosyllabic couplet such as Chaucer employs in his *House of Fame*. Scott made great use of *The Bruce* in writing the *Lord of the Isles*.

“He wes in all his deidis lele ;<sup>1</sup>  
 For him dedeynzeit<sup>2</sup> nocht to dele  
 With trechery, na with falsset.  
 His hart on hey honour wes set:  
 And hym contenyt on sic maner,  
 That all him luffyt<sup>3</sup> that wer him ner.      <sup>3</sup> *loved*  
 Bot he wes nocht so fayr, that we  
 Suld spek gretly off his beauté:  
 In wysage<sup>4</sup> wes he sumdeill gray,      <sup>4</sup> *visage*  
 And had black hair as Ic hard say ;  
 Bot off lymmys he wes weill made,  
 With banis gret, and schuldrys braid . . .  
 Quhen he wes blyth he wes lufly,  
 And meyke and sweyt in cumpany :  
 Bot quha<sup>5</sup> in battaill mycht him se      <sup>5</sup> *who*  
 All othir contenance had he.  
 And in spek wlispyt he sumdeill ;  
 Bot that sat him rycht wondre weill.”

—*The Brus* (Portrait of the Douglas).

“A! fredome is a noble thing !  
 Fredome mayss<sup>6</sup> man to haiff liking ;      <sup>6</sup> *makes*  
 Fredome all solace to man giffis :  
 He levys<sup>7</sup> at ess<sup>8</sup> that frely levys !      <sup>7</sup> *lives*      <sup>8</sup> *ease*  
 A noble hart may have nane ess  
 Na ellys nocht that may him pless  
 Gyff<sup>9</sup> fredome fayle ; for fre liking      <sup>9</sup> *If*  
 Is yharnyt<sup>10</sup> our all othir thing.      <sup>10</sup> *yearned for*  
 Na he, that ay hass levyt fre,  
 May nocht know weill the propyrte,  
 The angryr, na the wrechyt dome,  
 That is cowplyt to foule thyrl dome.  
 Bot gyff he had assayit it,  
 Than all perquer<sup>11</sup> he suld it wyt,      <sup>11</sup> *perfectly*  
 And suld think fredome mar to pryss,  
 Than all the gold in world that is ”

—*The Brus* (Freedom).



The moral Gower, as Chaucer called him, was a few years older than his great contemporary and friend, and claimed him as his disciple. Not much is known of the actual life of **John Gower** (1323?-1408). He was very learned, possessed lands in various counties, had a snug seat in Kent, and wrote three unconscionably long and prosaic poems in three different languages. These are *Speculum Meditantis*, in French; *Vox Clamantis*, in Latin; and *Confessio Amantis*, in English. The first is lost. The last he sat down to write when he was turned of sixty; it runs to thirty thousand rhymed octosyllabic lines, and it is constructed in much the same way as Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. It is a collection of tales, none of them original, told to a Lover by his Confessor for the purpose of showing how indulgence in any of the Seven Deadly Sins hinders the growth of true love. The stories are taken from the *Romances* and the *Gesta Romanorum*. The dialogue between Lover and Confessor is the setting, or framework, of the incorporated stories. Sloth, for example, is one of the Seven Deadly Sins, and admits of six varieties—Delay, Pusillanimity, Forgetfulness, Negligence, Idleness, Somnolence; the stories are accordingly arranged in sections to illustrate these vices. At the end of each story Confessor asks Lover whether he is guilty of the form of vice it illustrates. The reply of Lover varies. The last tale of the whole long collection is the longest, and, curiously enough, the best. It is memorable as having furnished the plot of *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*—a play sometimes attributed to Shakespeare.

**Geoffrey Chaucer** (1340-1400), the father of English poetry, and the first English poet to achieve European celebrity, was the son and grandson of wine-merchants carrying on business in London. Born in London, he was a true son of the city, and was more or less constantly connected with it during the whole course of his life. The London of Chaucer's time, however, it should be remembered, was very different from the huge noisy Babylon which it is now. The Thames was then a clear-flowing stream, and the coun-

try was only a few minutes' walk from the heart of the town; while in the town itself there were green fields and gardens separating and adorning the narrow, picturesque streets. Thus with the social advantages of the town, Chaucer at the same time enjoyed from boyhood the calm delights and soothing influences of country life. Two other advantages were his, serviceable, if not essential, to the growth of a great poet—the benefits of courtly training and foreign travel. However it came about, we find young Chaucer, at the age of sixteen, filling the honorable position of page in the household of a prince of about his own age, Lionel, Duke of Clarence, the second son of Edward III. Two years later he accompanied the prince to the French wars, and, taking part in an engagement, had the misfortune to be captured by the enemy, and kept a prisoner till ransomed and released, in 1360, at the treaty of Bretigny. We next hear of him when he is about twenty-six, as one of the king's esquires, and in receipt of a small pension granted him for life. A little before this, however, he seems to have married a certain Philippa, described as one of the queen's ladies, to whom also a small pension was granted. Chaucer had already begun to write, and had found a steadfast patron in John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster—not yet “old” and “time-honored,” but exactly of the same age as his protégé. The young Duchess of Lancaster dying in 1369, Chaucer lamented his patron's and his own loss—for the Duchess Blanche had encouraged his verses—by a poem, which was afterwards gratefully remembered, to the writer's advantage, by her son, Henry IV. From about his thirtieth to his forty-second year Chaucer approves himself to have been a man of business capacity and courtly tact by the circumstance that he went for the king on no fewer than seven diplomatic missions, of which three were to Italy. The first of those Italian embassies was in 1372, and it is believed that on that occasion Chaucer met Petrarch (then nearly seventy) at Padua, and heard from his lips the story of patient Griselda. He may also have met Boccaccio; but Dante was dead. There can, however, be no doubt that the

genius of Chaucer received a new and vigorous inspiration from the Italian poetry of the Renaissance, with which his long sojourn of over a year in northern Italy made him well acquainted. This Italian mission was otherwise memorable: the king was so pleased with the success attending it that he made Chaucer Comptroller of the Customs of Wools, etc., in the port of London, and gave him a grant of a pitcher of wine daily. At the same time he received a life pension from his patron. The comptrollership required Chaucer's personal attention; his own pen, and not that of a deputy, had to make out the bills of lading. But his evenings were his own. He was now busy with his great work, *The Canterbury Tales*. In 1382 he was appointed to another comptrollership, that of the Petty Customs, and now he was permitted the services of a deputy. Six years later, in his forty-sixth year, he was member of Parliament for Kent, and at the height of his prosperity. But in the winter of that same year he sustained a great reverse of fortune, which continued for nearly three years. He lost his comptrollership, and was forced to borrow on the security of his annuities. It was all owing to the absence of his patron in Spain, for on his return Chaucer's fortunes revived. He was appointed to the Clerkship of Works, first at Westminster, and afterwards at Windsor. But these were short appointments. He was again in pecuniary difficulties; John of Gaunt died; his son seized the crown; and one of the first acts of Henry IV.—hearing, doubtless, of Chaucer's *Complaint to his Empty Purse*—was to grant to the needy poet an additional pension of £40. This he enjoyed for only a year, dying unexpectedly in the full maturity of his powers and in the midst of his poetical labors, in his garden-house at Westminster, where he had just made preparations for a long residence. He was the first of our poets to be buried in the sacred corner of Westminster Abbey.

In regard to his personal appearance, Chaucer was short of stature and of slender make, modest and even shy in company, with an elfish or abstracted demeanor, and a habit of looking down, yet of an erect bearing of body, and swift

in walking. Mine host of the Tabard is pleasantly ironical on the subject of Chaucer's slenderness, and twits him on his absent looks. His love of lonely nature, of fields and trees and birds and flowers; his love of books, and absorption in his studies, sitting for hours dumb as a stone till his looks were dazed, along with other interesting details of his personal habits, may be read in his *Prologue to the Legend of the Nine Good Women*. As a poet he was a consummate artist in both form and melody. His skill in narrative and characterization has rarely been equalled, never surpassed. His most effective touches are made with the utmost ease and simplicity; there is no appearance of striving after effect. The tale is told, the portrait drawn and colored, not to please any second or third person, but because to do so is delightful to the artist. His range is universal; he tells every kind of story, depicts every type of character. The most distinctive qualities of his verse are tenderness, humor, and shrewd common-sense; there is, besides, a sweet humanity, which takes all bitterness from his satire, and exhibits some degree of a gracious sympathy with every sort and condition of men. Chaucer has no animosities, and cherishes no grudge. He is a perfect contrast to his contemporary, the earnest but atrabilious Langland. He looked upon the world of men with different eyes. He was willing to be pleased, and sought out the bright side always. Even the worldliness of the clergy amused and did not madden him. His chivalry to women, his gentleness to children, his sympathy with youth, and his kindly feeling for all are everywhere apparent in his poems. He knew and lived in the society of persons of rank, yet long before Tennyson he placed the kind heart above the coronet, and faithfulness over the claims of high descent. Nobility of soul had ever his warmest admiration, without regard to the rank of life in which it was revealed. His humor is usually subtle and playful; even at its broadest and coarsest it is genuine, and has at last the artist's apology to excuse it. His pathos is natural, sensitive, and searching. His stories of Constance, little Hugh of Lincoln, and patient Griselda exhibit charac-

teristic specimens of this quality in various relations. His common-sense, blent with gently bantering humor—showing his knowledge of the world—may be seen even in his portrait of the Monk, or in the postscript or l'envoy to the Clerk's Tale of Griselda.

Chaucer's genius developed under three great influences, and therefore reveals three stages of growth. There is, first, the French stage, to which belong his *A B C*, the *Compleynte to Pity*, and the *Dethe of Blaunche the Duchesse*; also, if they be Chaucer's, the *Romaunt of the Rose* and *The Flower and the Leaf*. The time is during his attendance at court, and extends from about 1365 to 1372. There is, second, the Italian stage, to which belong his *Troilus and Creseide*, *The Compleynte of Mars and Venus*, *Anelida and Arcite*, *The Assembly or Parliament of Foules*, *The Hous of Fame*, and about ten of the *Canterbury Tales*. This is the time of his diplomatic missions and his personal attendance on the Customs at the port of London, and stretches over ten or twelve years from 1372. Lastly, there is the English stage of his poetical development, in which, having assimilated what was best in French spirit and Italian form and freedom, he applied his whole heart to English nature, home themes (for the most part), and a native style. To this time belong his *Legende of Good Women*, the *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, and the best and most English of the *Tales* themselves.

The plan of the *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer's greatest work, is told in the Prologue. A party of thirty representative pilgrims of both sexes, and of all ranks from noble to peasant, set off one morning from the Tabard in Southwark, to go under the guidance of the landlord of that famous hostel to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket at Canterbury. They propose to lighten the journey by stories on the way, each pilgrim to tell two, and to return again, telling stories as before, to the Tabard to a great supper, at which the best storyteller is to be the guest of the other pilgrims. The stories told number only twenty-four in all, so that the plan remains unfulfilled. Each story befits the character of the person

that tells it, and the connection is made by the author's narrative or the dialogue of the pilgrims.

“And as for me, though than I konne but lyte,<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> little  
 On bokes for to rede I me delyte,  
 And to hem yive I feyth and ful credence,  
 And in myn herte have hem in reverence  
 So hertely, that ther is game noon,  
 That fro my bokes maketh me to goon,  
 But yt be seldom on the holy day,  
 Save, certeynly, whan that the monethe of May  
 Is comen, and that I here the foules synge,  
 And that the floures gynnen for to sprynge,  
 Fairewel my boke, and my devocioun!  
 Now have I thanne suche a condicioun,  
 That of alle the floures in the mede,  
 Thanne love I most thise floures white and rede,  
 Suche as men callen daysyes in her toun.  
 To hem have I so grete affeccioun,  
 As I seyde erst, whanne comen is the May,  
 That, in my bed ther daweth me no day,  
 That I nam<sup>2</sup> uppe and walkyng in the mede, <sup>2</sup> am not  
 To seen this floure ayein<sup>3</sup> the sonne sprede, <sup>3</sup> against  
 Whan it up rysith erly by the morwe;  
 That blissful sight softneth al my sorwe . . .  
 And doune on knes anoon ryght I me sette,  
 And as I koude, this fresshe flour I grette,  
 Knelyng alwey, til it unclosed was,  
 Upon the smale, softe, swote<sup>4</sup> gras, <sup>4</sup> sweet  
 That was with floures swote enbrouded<sup>5</sup> al, <sup>5</sup> embroidered  
 Of swich swetnesse, and swich odour over-al,  
 That for to speke of gomme, or herbe, or tree,  
 Comparisoun may noon ymaked be;  
 For yt surmounteth pleynly alle odoures,  
 And eek of riche beautee alle floures . . .  
 Adoune ful softly I gan to synke,  
 And lenyng on myn elbowe and my syde,  
 The longe day I shoope me for tabide<sup>6</sup> <sup>6</sup> prepared to stay  
 For nothing ellis, and I shal nat lye,  
 But for to loke upon the daysie;  
 That men by reson wel it calle may  
 The daisie, or elles the ye of day,  
 The emperice, and floure of floures alle.  
 I pray to God that faire mote she falle,  
 And alle that loven floures, for hire sake.”

—*Prologue to the Legend of Good Women.*



"For him was levere<sup>1</sup> have at his beddes heede <sup>1</sup>*he would rather*  
 Twenty bookes, clad in blak or reede,  
 Of Aristotle and his philosophie,  
 Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sawtrie.  
 But al be that he was a philosophre,  
 Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;  
 But al that he mighte of his frendes hente,<sup>2</sup> <sup>2</sup>*get*  
 On bookes and on lernyng he it spente . . .  
 Of studie took he most cure and most heede.  
 Not oo<sup>3</sup> word spak he more than was neede, <sup>3</sup>*one*  
 And that was seid in forme and reverence  
 And schort and quyk, and ful of high sentence.<sup>4</sup> <sup>4</sup>*meaning*  
 Sownynge<sup>5</sup> in moral vertu was his speche, <sup>5</sup>*Tending to*  
 And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche."

—*Prologue to the Tales* (The Clerk).

"Ther is, at the West syde of Itaille,  
 Doun at the roote of Vesulus the colde,  
 A lusty playne, abundant of vitaille,  
 Wher many a tour and toun thou mayst biholde,  
 That founded were in tyme of fadres olde,  
 And many another delitable syghte,  
 And Saluces this noble contree hyghte.<sup>6</sup> <sup>6</sup>*is called*

—*The Clerkes Tale.*

"In olde dayes of the kyng Arthour,  
 Of which that Britouns speken gret honour,  
 Al was this lond fulfilled of fayrie;  
 The elf-queen, with her joly compaignye,  
 Dauncede ful oft in many a grene mede.  
 This was the old oppynyoun, as I rede;  
 I speke of many hundrid yer ago;  
 But now can no man see noon elves mo.  
 For now the grete charité and prayeres  
 Of lymytours and other holy freres,  
 That sechen every lond and every streem,  
 As thik as motis in the sonne-beem,  
 Blessynge halles, chambres, kichenes, and boures,  
 Citees, burghes, castles hihe and toures,  
 Thropes,<sup>7</sup> bernes,<sup>8</sup> shepnes and dayeries— <sup>7</sup>*Villages,* <sup>8</sup>*barns*  
 That makith that ther ben no fayeries."

—*The Wyf of Bathes Tale.*

#### OTHER POETS

The next literary work of any note in the English language after  
*The Saxon Chronicle* was *The Brut* of Layamon. Exactly half a

century lies between them. *The Chronicle* ends with the year 1154; *The Brut* was written in 1205. *The Brut* consists of more than 16,000 long lines, mostly of old Anglo-Saxon alliterative verse, and it is the first English poem after the Norman Conquest. Layamon is thus the successor of Cædmon. His vocabulary is all but as pure as Cædmon's, but the Old English grammar had sustained such a shock from the Norman impact that Layamon's English looks like another language from Cædmon's. Layamon tells us all we know about himself, and how he undertook his work and carried it out, in the opening lines of his poem. We learn that he was a studious and pious priest belonging to a noble church at Ernleigh, on the banks of Severn in Worcestershire; that he was smitten with an ambition to tell the noble deeds of England (he means Britain) and trace the English (British) race from its heroic origin in ancient Troy; that first it was necessary to collect the materials for such a history, and that accordingly he set off on a pilgrimage over the whole land searching for manuscripts and oral traditions bearing on the subject. He found three important books, and on these, but especially on Wace's French historical romance of *Le Brut d'Angleterre* (a paraphrase of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Latin *Chronicle*), he based his English version of the British legend which regards Brutus, the great-grandson of Æneas, as the founder of the British race and nation. Speaking of himself in the third person, he thus describes his reverent joy in the work of translating: "Layamon laid down those books and turned over their leaves. He looked on them lovingly (may the Lord be merciful to him!). Then pen he took in hand, and wrote a parchment-book, and placed the words together, and compressed the three books into one." The poem, besides being popular in its day, was a storehouse for future writers. Here may be found the stories of Shakespeare's plays of *King Lear* and *Cymbeline*, and the original of Milton's legend of Sabrina in *Comus*. *The Brut* comes down to the death of the Welsh prince Cadwallader in the end of the seventh century.

Orm, a clerical brother and contemporary of Layamon, wrote a religious book consisting of an unrhymed metrical version of those portions of the New Testament that were read in church in the service of each day, along with homilies, also in metre, which, like the modern sermon, were meant to explain and apply selected portions of the sacred text. The work gets over the daily service for a month only. It is written in pure English without French admixture. The spelling is a strange feature of the book, the writer doubling certain letters according to a fixed principle of his own invention. He admonishes future transcribers to follow his spelling, "forr he ne mayy noliht elless onn Ennglissh writenn

riht te word." Orm's book was named *Ormulum* because he wrote it ; it appeared about the year 1215—the year of the Great Charter.

To **Thomas Rymour of Ereildoune**, commonly known as Thomas the Rhymer, Sir Walter Scott assigned the metrical romance of *Sir Tristrem*. Ereildoune, now Earlston, is in Berwickshire, not far from Melrose. Thomas in popular belief had a remarkable gift of prophecy. He flourished about the end of the thirteenth century.

In the earlier half of the fourteenth century there lived in Ham-pole, near Doncaster, a hermit named **Richard Rolle**, who, besides rendering parts of Scripture into English prose, wrote a rather dull moral poem called *The Pricke of Conscience*. It is in rhyming couplets, and describes heaven as a place where "there is bright somer ever to se, and never is wynter in that countree."

A lyrical poet, **Laurence Minot**, sang the great battles of Edward III., including the victories at Halidon Hill, Cressy, and Neville's Cross, in ten rhymed ballads of different measures. He was contemporary with Rolle.

Two anonymous poems, belonging probably to the middle or end of the thirteenth century, are worthy of mention here: the one, *The Land of Cockayne* (or *Kitchen Land*), describes a sensual paradise for monks, in which roasted geese fly about crying *Geese! all hot! all hot!*—and the other, *The Owl and the Nightingale*, sometimes assigned to Nicholas of Guildford, is an argument between the birds as to their respective merits. Both are in the rhymed octosyllabic measure of the French *fabliaux*.

## PROSE WRITERS

**Sir John Mandeville** informs us that he was born in the town of St. Albans, passed the sea in 1322, and traversed many distant provinces, kingdoms, and isles, including Turkey, Persia, India, and even China, as well as Upper and Lower Egypt. Grown tired and satisfied with travel, he came home after an absence of thirty-four years, and found amusement in writing an account of all he had seen and felt, first in Latin, then in French, and finally in English, "that every man of my nacioun may undirstonde it." The book, entitled *Voyage and Travel*, is written with spirit and fluency ; it is wonderfully accurate where he states his actual experiences, and wonderfully credulous where he does not.

It was very popular. He was probably about twenty-two years of age when he first went a-roaming, having previously prepared himself by the study of medicine. He died at Liege in 1372.

**John Wyclif** (1324–1384) was in everything but the name the first English Protestant. He not only prepared the way for the Reformation of the sixteenth century by translating the Vulgate, or St. Jerome's Latin version of the Bible, into English in 1383, but he also actually began that great movement by denying the papal supremacy and doctrines, notably the doctrine of transubstantiation. He refused to be silenced by the Church, and appealed to the people in numerous polemical tracts and sermons, penned in strong, racy English, which the plainest peasant could understand and feel. He was of Yorkshire origin; was educated at Oxford, where he held, among other honors, the mastership of Balliol College; and was rector of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, from 1377. Shut out from Oxford in 1381, he spent the last three years of his life in quiet pastoral work and Bible translating at Lutterworth. He might have sat for the portrait of Chaucer's parson. No fewer than five papal bulls were issued against him; but thanks to the protection of John of Gaunt, he remained comparatively unmolested, and died peacefully in his bed on the last day of 1384. By his Bible he was one of the makers of English prose, and he originated the pamphlet form of literature.

## I. EXTENDED LIST OF WRITERS FROM 1066 TO 1400

### (A) Latin Writers

- 1095–1143. William of Malmesbury (Anglo-Norman), historian.
- 1110 ?–1154. Geoffrey of Monmouth (Welsh), legendary historian.
- 1154—. Henry of Huntingdon (Anglo-Norman), historian.
- 1100–1159. Nicholas Breakspeare (English), Pope Adrian IV., theologian.
- 1119 ?–1170. Thomas à Becket (English), Archbishop.
- 1210. Walter Map, poet and historian.

- 1146-1223. Giraldus Cambrensis (Welsh), Bishop, historian.  
 1175 ?-1253. Robert Grosstête, Bishop, theologian.  
     1259. Matthew Paris, theologian.  
     1290 ? Michael Scott (Scottish), philosopher.  
 1214-1292. Roger Bacon (English), philosopher.  
 1265-1308. John Duns Scotus, scholastic philosopher.  
 1280-1347. William Occam, scholastic philosopher.  
     -1386-. John Fordun (Scottish), chronicler.

### (B) Early English Writers

1154. Writers in the Saxon Chronicle.  
     -1200-. Layamon, metrical chronicler.  
     -1250-. Orm, metrical religious writer.  
     -1250-. Author of Ancren Riwl, ecclesiastical writer.  
 1175 ?-1253. Robert Grosstête, Bishop, poet.  
     -1278-. Robert of Gloucester, metrical chronicler.  
     1300 ? Thomas of Ercildoune (Scottish), rhymist.  
     -1303-. Robert Manning, or Robert de Brunne, metrical chronicler.  
     1349. Richard Rolle, poet.  
     -1350-. Laurence Minot, poet.  
 1300 ?-1372. Sir John Mandeville, writer of travels.  
 1320 ?-1400? William Langland, poet.  
     -1350-. John de Trevisa, chronicler.  
 1322 ?-1395. John Barbour (Scottish), poet.  
 1324-1384. John Wyclif, theologian.  
 1323-1408. John Gower, poet.  
 1340-1400. Geoffrey Chaucer, poet.

### (C) French Writers

- 1068-1135. King Henry I., Beauclerk.  
     1180. Wace.  
     1210. Walter Map (or Mapes).  
 (And many other writers of metrical chronicles, *fabliaux*, and romances.)

## II. CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF WRITINGS FROM 1066 TO 1400

- 1121 ? Peterborough part of the Saxon Chronicle began.  
 1144 ? William of Malmesbury's *Historia Novella* (in Latin) ;  
     his *De Gestis Regum Anglorum* about twenty years  
     earlier.

1147. Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*.  
 1154 ? Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*.  
 1154. End of the Saxon Chronicle (at Peterborough).  
 1155 ? Wace's *Brut d'Angleterre*. Giraldus Cambrensis's *Descriptio Cambriæ*.  
 1180 ? Walter Map's *Lancelot du Lac*, *Queste de St. Graal*, *Mort Artur*.  
 1205 ? Layamon's *Brut* (in English).  
 1215 ? Orm's *Ormulum* (in English).  
 1225 ? Ancren Riwe. [*Dante born in 1265.*]  
 1268. Roger Bacon's *Opus Majus*; Michael Scott's *Musa Philosophica*.  
 1270-80. Havelok the Dane (in English); about the same time, Thomas the Rhymer's *Sir Tristrem*; also (in Latin) *Gesta Romanorum*; also *The Owl and the Nightingale*, a lyrical idyl in the Dorset dialect.  
 1298. Robert of Gloucester's *Chronicle* (in English); also his *Metrical Lives of the Saints*.  
 1300 ? John Duns Scotus's *Distinctiones*.  
 1303. Robert Manning's *Handlyng Sinne*. [*Boccaccio born in 1313.*]  
 1330-40 ? Richard Hampole's *Prick of Conscience*.  
 1352. Laurence Minot's *Songs on the battles of Edward III*.  
 1356. Mandeville's *Voyage and Travel*.  
 1360. Fordun's *Scotichronicon* (in Latin).  
 1362-63. Langland's *Vision of Piers Plowman*. About the same time, the *Romances of Sir Gawain and Morte d'Arthur* (in English). Also some early poems of Chaucer, (in French and Latin) of Gower.  
 1375. Barbour's *Bruce*. Langland's *Vision*. Chaucer's *House of Fame*, etc.  
 1380. Wyclif's *Translation of Bible*.  
 1393 ? Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (in English). Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* finished.



## 1400 - 1580

### FROM THE DEATH OF CHAUCER TO THE APPEARANCE OF SPENSER

THE range is over one hundred and eighty years, and extends from the commencement of the Plantagenet rule of the house of Lancaster through the Wars of the Roses, and the brief supremacy of the house of York, onward into the more settled government of the Tudor dynasty, to the middle of the reign of Elizabeth. The succession of sovereigns in the period is as follows: HOUSE OF LANCASTER—Henry IV., Henry V., and Henry VI.; HOUSE OF YORK—Edward IV., Edward V., and Richard III.; TUDORS—Henry VII., Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth. The chief events of English history, affecting more or less the literary growth of the period, are here presented as they occurred in the successive reigns:

**Reign of Henry IV., 1399–1413.**—Murder of Richard II. in Pontefract dungeons. Conspiracy and rebellion of the Earl of Northumberland, "Hotspur" Percy, Glendower, etc., and battle at Shrewsbury. Capture and imprisonment (for nineteen years) of Prince James of Scotland, driven by storm on the English coast. Persecution of the Lollards (of whom the chief was Sir John Oldcastle) all through the reign. Dissolute conduct of Prince Hal.

**Reign of Henry V., 1413–1422.**—Persecution of Lollards continued, and Oldcastle burned as a heretic. War with France: Agincourt, 1415; Treaty of Troyes, 1420—Henry declared heir and appointed Regent of France, and married to Catherine; France conquered.

**Reigns of Henry VI., 1422–1461, Edward IV., 1461–1483; Edward V., 1483; Richard III., 1483–1485.**—War with France; successful, notwithstanding the heroic mission of Joan d'Arc, until the death of John of Bedford; the English driven from all France, Calais excepted, by the year 1453; France lost. Thereafter, Wars of the Roses, from 1455 to 1485; battle of St. Albans; of Northampton;

of Wakefield ; of Mortimer's Cross (Yorkists victorious, and Edward IV. proclaimed king) ; of Towton ; then rivalry of Nevilles and Woodvilles, followed by more fighting ; at Barnet and at Tewkesbury the Lancastrians finally scattered, their confiscated estates giving great wealth to the king. The Crown thus independent of the Commons, and as the baronage was destroyed in the Wars, the monarchy became absolute. Ambition and crimes of Richard of Gloucester. The Babes in the Tower. Buckingham's revolt and execution. Battle of Bosworth. Despotism established.

*Note.*—From 1474 onward to the end of the period, and six years past it, William Caxton was industriously working his printing-press at Westminster.

**Henry VII., 1485–1509.**—Impostures of Simnel and Warbeck. Revolution in warfare by the introduction of artillery. Growing absolutism ; suppression of liveried retainers ; institution of Star Chamber. Marriage of Princess Margaret to James IV. of Scotland.

*Note.*—In this reign the art of printing was developed ; and important geographical discoveries were made—notably West Indies, Newfoundland, and the route to East Indies by the Cape.

**Henry VIII., 1509–1547.**—Battle of the Spurs and Flodden (1513) ; Field of the Cloth of Gold (1520) ; English Reformation ; the English Bible ; the Pilgrimage of Grace ; suppression of the monasteries ; the king despotic.

**Edward VI., 1547–1553.**—Battle of Pinkie. Reformation continues ; the Prayer-book. Kett's rising. Establishment of grammar-schools.

**Mary, 1553–1558.**—Lady Jane Grey, the Nine Days' Queen. Wyatt's "rebellion." Mary's marriage with Philip of Spain, son of the great emperor Charles V. Restoration of the Catholic religion. Cranmer executed, and Cardinal Pole made primate. The Persecutions (1555). Loss of Calais.

**Elizabeth, 1558–1580 [–1603].**—Protestantism restored ; the Thirty-nine Articles (1563). Mary Queen of Scots a captive in England in 1568. Elizabeth excommunicated by the Pope in 1570. England the champion of European Protestantism, 1572 (after Massacre of St. Bartholomew) ; English volunteers aiding the Netherlands against Spain in 1577.

*Note.*—From 1568 the voyages of Hawkins and Drake ; and between 1577–80 Drake sailed round the world.

In Scottish history the range of this period is from near the tenth year of the reign of Robert III., through the

reigns of James I. (1406-1437), James II. (1437-1460), James III. (1460-1488), James IV. (1488-1513), James V. (1513-1542), and Mary (1542-1567), to the thirteenth year of the reign of James VI. The chief events of the time were : Battle of Homildon, where Percy took the Douglas prisoner ; starvation of David of Rothesay in Falkland Palace ; descent of Donald of the Isles upon Aberdeenshire ; battle of Harlaw ; return of James I. from England after nineteen years' absence ; murder of James I. in Perth Convent ; murder of the Douglas brothers at Edinburgh ; murder of the next Douglas by the king at Stirling ; James II.'s death at the siege of Roxburgh Castle ; execution of James III.'s minions at Lauder Bridge ; battle of Sauchie, and murder of the king ; Perkin Warbeck's arrival in Scotland, and invasion of England on his behalf ; foundation of a Scottish navy ; James IV.'s marriage to Margaret Tudor. Disputes with England : battle of Flodden, 1513 ; James V.'s differences with Henry VIII., and rout of Scottish army at Solway Moss ; battle of Pinkie in 1547 ; assassination of Cardinal Beaton ; Mary of Scotland's return from France ; destruction of churches and monasteries ; Scottish Reformation ; murder of Rizzio ; of Darnley ; imprisonment of the queen ; battle of Langside, and flight of Queen Mary to England, where she was at once made a close prisoner ; Protestantism established under Regent Murray ; his assassination in 1570 ; civil war in Scotland ; death of John Knox in 1572 ; regency of Morton.

*Note.*—Printing was introduced into Scotland by Chepman and Myllar in 1508. Universities were founded at St. Andrews in 1411, Glasgow in 1450, Aberdeen in 1494, and Edinburgh in 1582. In 1532 the Court of Session was founded. The National Presbyterian Church was established by Act of Parliament in 1567, and confirmed by charter in 1592.

### INTRODUCTION

In a general survey of the field of English literature of this period, the most obvious fact is its comparative barrenness. It boasts of no great name like that of

Chaucer, which gives such distinction to the immediately preceding period ; still less does it approach the excellence of the immediately succeeding period, glorious with the famous names of Spenser, Bacon, Shakespeare, and Milton. It has indeed been set down as the most barren period in our literary history. In a general sense the statement is true ; but it is apt to be misunderstood. In the first place, it was a transition period, in which, if little of outstanding worth was achieved, ample and important preparation was made for later achievement. It was the sowing-time, which made possible the rich harvest of the Elizabethan age. In the second place, the appearance of barrenness was confined to England, and did not extend to Scotland. On the contrary, the period exhibits a literary productivity in Scotland which may fairly be described as phenomenally active and brilliant. It is not till we come to the middle of the eighteenth century that we find in Scotland such activity and brilliancy of work again attending the cultivation of letters. The greatest name of the period is that of a Scotsman—William Dunbar. His is the most prominent name in poetry between Chaucer and Spenser. And not only does he rise above the best English poet-names of the period—those of Skelton, Howard, and Gascoigne—but he is the central figure in a large and respectable group of Scottish verse-writers, of whom, as far as we can judge—for the works of many of them have perished—Blind Harry, Henryson, Gavin Douglas, and Sir David Lindsay were the chief. In his *Lament for the Makaris* Dunbar enumerates a list of eighteen famous contemporary Scottish poets, of quite half of whom not a line, or only the veriest fragments, have been found. Yet Lindsay regarded two of those lost poets, Kennedy and Quentin Shaw, both from Ayrshire,

as worthy to be called great, while Gavin Douglas thought them the rivals of Dunbar, and placed them with him in the Muses' Court in his own poem of *The Palace of Honor*. Their verses were lost and their fame forgotten in the long troubles that came upon Scotland after Flodden.

The poetry of the period exhibits three distinct phases. There is first the continued influence of Chaucer, visible in the imitative work of such immediate followers as Occleve and Lydgate, and in such doubtfully assigned poems as *The Flower and the Leaf* and *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*; in the work which came later of Stephen Hawes, author of *The Pastime of Pleasure*; and in part of the work of Skelton, Sackville, and Gascoigne, and the Scottish poets generally from King James to Sir David Lindsay. The influence of Chaucer reveals itself here in the romantic strain of allegorical and the humorous strain of realistic narrative, and in the occasional employment of his seven-lined stanza, known as rhyme royal. The second phase shows itself in Skelton's attempt in his later satirical work at an original measure, known by his name, of short and repeatedly rhyming lines, exceedingly popular for a while, but dying out without followers as the history of English poetry entered upon its third phase. This third phase was due to Italian influence, notably that of Petrarch, acting upon the genius of such men as Wyatt and Lord Surrey. They inaugurated the amourist school of poetry in England—a school which includes the later names of Sidney, Spenser, and Drummond of Hawthornden, and also, to some extent, Shakespeare. With the amourist poets love—regarded rather as a theme for pensive elaboration than a passion—was the dominant subject, and regular stanzas were the necessary form, the sonnet being favor-

ite. Blank-verse was introduced by Surrey, and applied to dramatic composition by Sackville. All through the period, unaffected by phase or fashion, the anonymous Ballad ran its own free course with wild, peculiar grace, and kept the spirit of natural poetry alive in the heart of the people. To this period belong the ballads of *Otterburn* and *Chevy Chase* (*chevachie*), *The Nut-Brown Maid*, and *Robin Hood*, the Sherwood outlaw.

Besides showing Chaucerian influence, the Scottish poetry of this period already revealed those features which are characteristic of the whole body and history of Scottish poetry. They stand out most prominently in Dunbar, and include a love of wild nature accompanied with a vivid power of presentation and a strong sense of the beauty of color; and a vigorous and lively humor, expressing itself in abrupt and daring transitions from one mood to another. A trace of French lyrical influence can be detected in Dunbar; and Henryson has the merit of commencing the pastoral and the moral tale.

A special feature of the literary work of this period was the vast amount and great variety of translation. Typical work of this kind, having important influence on later literature, includes Mallory's *Morte d'Arthur*, Gavin Douglas's Scottish version of the *Æneid*, and Tyndale's English Bible. Such translations were the supply of scholars to the public demand for more knowledge—a demand which sprang up on the revival of learning, and which the invention of printing made it easy to meet. The revival of learning dates from the entry of the Turk into Europe in 1453, and the concomitant flight of classical scholars from Constantinople westward over Southern Europe. More fugitive scholars brought with them the precious MSS. of antiquity, and partly from a love of learning, partly as a means of maintaining them-



selves, opened schools in towns like Florence and Paris, where they taught to students, who came flocking from all quarters to hear, the literary masterpieces of the classical age. The literature of ancient Greece came upon Western Europe like the revelation of day. The long night of a thousand years known as the Dark Ages was ended. Modern times were dawning.

While translation was one effect of the revival of learning, teaching was another. Schools were established everywhere. As many as twenty grammar-schools were founded in England during the generation just preceding the Reformation. Men like Grocyn and Linacre, Colet and More, led and sought to direct the educational movement; it was encouraged by Erasmus, and munificently patronized by Wolsey and Henry VIII. Classical study became fashionable; persons of rank, even princes and princesses, became ardent students; and the teacher everywhere was honored, and wielded a wide influence. In England the revival of learning took a social, religious, and political rather than a literary direction, and for a time indeed it was narrowed to religious controversy, but revived again after the severer struggle had passed and religious freedom was established in the reign of Elizabeth. One great benefit of classical study upon our literature was to supply our authors with the best foreign models for their inspiration or imitation. But it should not be overlooked that the mechanical service of Caxton, in reproducing the best works of Chaucer and other native authors, was scarcely less valuable. He kept alive among the people the love of poetry, maintaining the continuity of our national poetry; and he helped to make possible the Elizabethan age.

The roots of the English drama are in this period. Many years were to pass before the drama became liter-

ary. In its original form it was a popular means of religious instruction and social entertainment. It was introduced by the clergy ; the priests were the first actors, and the churches the first theatres. The subjects were taken from Scripture history and the lives of the saints, and the representations were known as Mysteries and Miracle Plays. They were already acted in England in the early part of the twelfth century ; but it was not till the fourteenth century that they were made quite intelligible to the public by the use of English words. At that time it became common for the members of town guilds to undertake the performance, but the Church was still the producer of those religious plays. In 1327 or 1328 the Pope gave leave to Ralph Higden, a monk near Chester, to write a set of twenty-five miracle plays in English for the guild brethren of the town. The set continued to be acted for many successive years. It began with the *Downfall of Lucifer*, presented by the tanners, and wound up a few days later with *Doomsday*, enacted by the weavers. The set is preserved ; and there are besides other two complete sets still remaining—the Wakefield (commonly called the Townley) set of thirty-two plays, and the Coventry set of forty-two. Miracle plays were common in Chaucer's day, and in Dunbar's a century later. The Reformation was not hostile to them, and they survived till Elizabeth's time, when they were killed off by the more brilliant and interesting secular drama. It should be remembered that Milton's first intention with the subject of *Paradise Lost* was to treat it as a miracle play, and he had actually made a commencement. A miracle play is still acted every tenth year at Ober-Ammergau, in Bavaria.

Miracle plays did not give way to moralities ; but the morality came later than the miracle play, and marks

a new step in the direction of the English drama. They seem to have come in during the long reign of Henry VI. in the fifteenth century. They taught by means of acted allegories some lesson of duty or virtuous life. The characters were the virtues or the vices, or even qualities and conditions of life and character, and might include such personages as Pity, Perseverance, Death, Riches, Contemplation, Confession, Imagination, Free-will, etc. In the end the virtue triumphed, and the vice (out of which grew the clown of comedy) gave amusement to the spectators by tormenting the devil. The titles of two moral plays popular in Henry VIII.'s reign were *The Cradle of Security* and *The Marriage of Wisdom and Wit*. The moral plays seem to have been too dull and didactic for popular favor, till the practice grew up of enlivening them by interpolated humorous scenes, solely designed to hold the audience together. These interludes were sometimes coarse beyond expression, and with their suggested and flaunted immoralities offered a strange contrast to the morality they were designed to lighten.

At last John Heywood wrote independent interludes, acted by themselves, and purely for the sake of amusement. They were farcical, and were immensely popular at the court of Henry VIII. His interlude of *The Four P's* is a good specimen of this elementary kind of dramatic writing. Partly from the interlude, which, whatever its poverty, was at least an English growth, and partly from such plays of Plautus and Terence as were read and occasionally acted at the chief public schools, sprang up, about the middle of the sixteenth century, our native English comedy. The first English comedy, *Ralph Roister Doister*, was acted not later than 1551; it was the work of Nicholas Udall, head-master

of Eton School. About ten years later—that is, in 1562—*Gorboduc* (or *Ferrex and Porrex*), the first English tragedy, was acted. It was the joint composition of Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton, and was modelled on the lines of Seneca and the Greek writers of tragedy; but fortunately English tragic drama did not develop on those lines.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF THE PRINCIPAL AUTHORS

- I. *Poets*.—KING JAMES I. OF SCOTLAND, JOHN SKELTON, WILLIAM DUNBAR, and HENRY HOWARD (Earl of Surrey).  
*Next after these may be named*—HENRYSON, GAVIN DOUGLAS, LINDSAY, WYATT, GASCOIGNE, and SACKVILLE.
- II. *Prose Writers*.—SIR THOMAS MORE and ROGER ASCHAM  
*Next after these may be named*—MALLORY, CAXTON, TYNDALE, LATIMER, KNOX, FOXE, and HOLINSHED.
- III. *Dramatic Writers*.—JOHN HEYWOOD, NICHOLAS UDALL, THOMAS SACKVILLE (Lord Buckhurst), and JOHN STILL.

#### POETS

One of the most accomplished poets of his day was **James I. of Scotland** (1394–1437), the son and successor of Robert III., and younger brother of the unfortunate David of Rothesay, whose tragic death has been so powerfully and pathetically described in *The Fair Maid of Perth*. The story of the life of the Poet King reads like a romance. The details of the former part of it are supplied by Wyntoun's *Chronicle* and *The King's Quair*. The latter part is matter of Scottish history. At the age of ten he was sent by his father to France, partly to be educated, but chiefly to be beyond reach of his uncle, the crafty and ambitious Duke of Albany. The ship in which he was carried was captured by the English off the Yorkshire coast, and Henry IV., the King of England, detained him, for political purposes, a prisoner in Windsor Tower. His father died broken-hearted at the news of his captivity, and James now (1406) became King

of Scotland, but a king without a crown. His captivity continued for nearly eighteen years from this date—through the rest of the reign of Henry IV., the whole reign of Henry V., and into the second year of the reign of Henry VI. Apart from the loss of his liberty, James had nothing to complain of at the English court; he was well educated in all the arts and exercises of mind and body befitting his rank. It would seem that he even accompanied Henry V. to France, and took an active part in the English conquest of that country. The summer of the year 1423 brought with it the great romance of his life, told by himself in one of the sweetest passages of *The King's Quair*. Looking wearily out of a window in Windsor Tower one morning in May, he saw in the garden below "the fairest and the freshest youngë flower" in the person of a beautiful lady of the court, with whom he fell instantly and completely in love. It was the king's cousin, Lady Joan Beaufort. The attachment was encouraged, in the hope of a friendly alliance with Scotland. The lady returned James's affection with equal devotion, and the marriage was celebrated early in 1424. In April of the same year he was restored to Scotland, and shortly afterwards was crowned with his queen at Scone. He made a vigorous ruler. He enforced justice till "the key kept the castle and the rush-bush the cow." He founded schools, he encouraged learning, he introduced new and useful arts for the protection and development of his country; but in the course of these reforms, carried through with relentless energy, he incurred the hatred of a faction of disaffected nobles, of whom the chief was his own uncle Walter, Earl of Atholl. With the great body of the people, whose sentiments he learned by mingling with them in disguise, he soon became extremely popular. In the end, his enemies overmatched him by treachery, and he was cruelly slain in the convent of the Black Friars at Perth, in circumstances familiar to every reader of Scottish history.

King James I. is remembered in literary history for *The King's Quair*, *Christ's Kirk on the Green*, *Peebles at the Play*

—though the last two have been denied to him, but on no sufficient grounds; and for many *cantilenæ* that have perished or are only known anonymously. *Christ's Kirk* and *Peebles at the Play* are the first Scottish poems of that humorous kind, descriptive of boisterous rustic mirth and mischief, which Allan Ramsay, and especially Burns, have made so popular in Scotland—the former in three additional cantos to the original poem of King James, the latter in *Hallow E'en* and the *Holy Fair*. They are written in a peculiar rollicking measure with double rhymes, and are half lyrical, half narrative. *The King's Quair* is a poem in the Chaucerian manner and measure, and the subject is the story of his own romantic passion for Lady Joan Beaufort. The poem is partly descriptive and partly allegorical; and while the allegorical part, though in the approved manner of the times, is sufficiently tedious, the descriptive portions are in many separate passages of such singular vividness, sincerity, and beauty as to win at once the reader's interest and sympathy. Though an imitation of Chaucer, whom James studied and admired, the poem is not a mere imitation. There is ever and again an original strain of reflective feeling which has a strangely modern sound. The measure was the invention of Chaucer, but is known, in honor of King James, as rhyme royal. It consists of a seven-lined stanza of five iambs, with the rhymes occurring according to the formula *a b a b b c c*. The poem was written in the summer months of 1423, and runs to nearly two hundred stanzas. The dedication, which closes the poem, is to Chaucer and Gower. To them

“I recommend my book in linēs seven,  
And eke their souls unto the bliss of heaven.”

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“Bewailing in my chamber thus alone,  
Despeired of all joye and remedye,  
For-tirit<sup>1</sup> of my thocht, and wo begone,      <sup>1</sup> *Very tired*  
Unto the wyndow gan I walk in hye,<sup>2</sup>      <sup>2</sup> *haste*  
To se the world and folk that went forby;



As for the tyme, though I of mirthis fude  
Myght haue no more, to luke it did me gude. . . .

“ And there-with kest I doun myn eye ageyne,  
Quhare as I sawe, walking vnder the toure,  
Full secretly new cummyn hir to pleyne,<sup>1</sup> *<sup>1</sup> play*  
The fairest or the freschest zongë flour  
That euer I sawe, me thoght, before that houre,  
For quich sodayne abate, anon astert  
The blude of all my body to my hert.

“ And though I stude abaisit tho a lyte,<sup>2</sup> *<sup>2</sup> then a little*  
No wonder was; for-quhy my wittis all  
Were so ouercom with plesance and delyte,  
Onely throu latting of myn eyën fall,  
That sudaynly my hert became hir thrall,  
For euer, of free wyll; for of manace  
There was no takyn<sup>3</sup> in hir suetë face. *<sup>3</sup> token*

“ And in my hede I drewe ryght hastily,  
And eft-sonës I lent it forth ageyne,  
And sawe hir walk, that<sup>4</sup> verray womanly, *<sup>4</sup> so*  
With no wight mo, bot onely wommen tueyne.  
Than gan I studye in my-self and seyne,<sup>5</sup> *<sup>5</sup> say*  
‘A! suete, ar ze a worldly creature,  
Or heavenly thing in likenesse of nature?’”

—*The King's Quair.*

**John Skelton** (1460?–1529), scholar, humorist, and boon companion, was one of the most popular Englishmen of his day. The place of his birth is conjectural—perhaps Cumberland, more probably Norfolk; but it is known that both Oxford and Cambridge claimed and honored him as a distinguished son; and that he was rector of Diss in Norfolkshire early in the sixteenth century. Special proofs of his learning are found in the testimony of Erasmus, who styled him “the grace and glory of English scholars,” and in the fact that he was appointed tutor to the name-son and successor of Henry VII. His humor, which was of the Rabelaisian order—spontaneous, exuberant, and coarse—was long a notorious tradition, and still lives in his popular poems. His

serious poems, written in the reign of Henry VII., are dull enough, though they were no doubt considered scholarly work in their day; they include some frigid elegies, and a long, elaborate morality entitled *Magnificence*, in the allegorical style of Chaucer. But in the reign of Henry VIII. a spirit of eccentricity and fun seized his pen, and he dashed off long yards of short-lined extempore verse, which at once took the public ear, and which, though it looks like doggerel in the part, is even yet entertaining in the piece. The best examples of his humorous verse are *The Tunning* [i.e., Brewing] of *Elinor Rumming*, a comic description of a low ale-house and its female frequenters, and *The Death of Philip Sparrow*, a sprightly poem of nearly fourteen hundred lines, in which a young girl amuses her grief for the death of her pet sparrow with a thousand fancies and reminiscences. A great deal of Skelton's humor is satirical, and the satire of *The Bowge of Court* occupies a position midway between his serious and his humorous verse. The clergy, as well as the court, are attacked in *Colin Clout*, and Wolsey in *Why come ye not to Court?* Wolsey seems to have incurred Skelton's resentment by disappointing him in a promise of preferment, and to have felt his attack, which is undeniably scurrilous, so keenly that he ordered the daring rhymers' arrest, and would have treated him with the utmost rigor had not the sanctuary of Westminster been at hand to protect him. As it was, Skelton was a prisoner in the sanctuary till his death—for the cardinal outlived him two years.

Skelton's position in the history of English poetry is peculiar. Like an islet half-way between two island groups, he stands alone between the decaying influence of the Chaucerian school and the formation of the new Italian school under Howard. He owns the influence of Chaucer in his earlier serious poems on religious and moral subjects; but in his humorous satires, written expressly in the rough vernacular to catch at the dawn of the Reformation the popular ear, he invents a style which, though having no regular form, is not without melody, and is far from being deficient in rude force and effectiveness.

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>             "Merry Margaret,<br/>             As midsummer flower,<br/>             Gentle as falcon,<br/>             Or hawk of the tower,<br/>             With solace and gladness,<br/>             Much mirth and no madness,<br/>             All good and no badness;<br/>             So joyously,<br/>             So maidenly,<br/>             So womanly,<br/>             Her demeaning,<br/>             In everything,<br/>             Far, far passing<br/>             That I can indite,<br/>             Or suffice to write,<br/>             Of Merry Margaret,<br/>             As midsummer flower,           </p> | <p>             Gentle as falcon,<br/>             Or hawk of the tower;<br/>             As patient and as still,<br/>             And as full of good-will,<br/>             As fair Isiphil,<br/>             Coliander,<br/>             Sweet Pomander,<br/>             Good Cassander;<br/>             Steadfast of thought,<br/>             Well made, well wrought,<br/>             Far may be sought,<br/>             Ere you can find<br/>             So courteous, so kind,<br/>             As merry Margaret,<br/>             This midsummer flower,<br/>             Gentle as falcon,<br/>             Or hawk of the tower."           </p> |
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*—May Margaret.*

The greatest poet of the period, and the greatest that Scotland has ever produced, Burns alone excepted, was **William Dunbar** (1460?–1513), born probably in East Lothian, a cadet of the historical house of March, and educated at St. Andrews, where he graduated M.A. in 1479. He appears to have been destined for the Church from his infancy. On his nurse's knee he was dandled as "little bishop." He entered the Order of St. Francis, and in the gray habit of an itinerant friar begged and preached his way through Scotland, England, and Northern France. As then practised, it was a life of flattery, falsehood, and deception—yet not all unholy either, interspersed as it was with seasons of pure and tender devotion. Its numerous adventures and experiences were at least serviceable to the future poet, bringing him into contact with many different scenes and much varied society, and strengthening and storing his mind with the materials of poetical thought. From under that gray hood a pair of observant eyes, the busy servants of an active and thoughtful brain, were quietly taking those views of nature and human nature which his verses yet express so freshly, because so truly. Before he was thirty he abandoned the order as unsuitable to his disposition, and we next find him following the

scarcely less roving life of an embassy clerk. In the diplomatic service of Scotland he visited Germany, Italy, France, and Spain, besides England and Ireland. At last, somewhere near the very end of the fifteenth century, Dunbar ceased to wander, and settled in Edinburgh, where he became Court Laureate to James IV., and was by-and-by known in London as the Rhymer of Scotland. He was pensioned in 1500, and kept by the king in more or less constant attendance at the new palace of Holyrood till the fatal year 1513. The pension, which was at first only £10 a year, rose finally to £80. He was still a clergyman, though he had doffed the regular for the secular garb, and was sustaining his heart with the hope of a benefice; but the hope was continually deferred, and never fulfilled. In 1501 he was one of the notaries in the embassy to London, appointed to arrange the king's marriage with Margaret, daughter of Henry VII. The union was celebrated in 1503, and was the occasion of that excellent specimen of his "bold music," *The Thistle and the Rose*. Queen Margaret became his warm patroness—his "advocate both fair and sweet"—and there can be no doubt that if Dunbar's advancement in the direction of his humble ambition for independency had lain with her, there was hardly a benefice to which she would not have promoted him. But, unfortunately for the poet, the king was not "Joan Thamson's man," and would not be led by his wife. Dunbar's half-humorous, half-earnest petitions to the king for a "kirk" are an interesting feature of his poetry; and that they remained unanswered can only be explained by the king's desire to keep at court as much as possible one whose conversational and poetical talents he appreciated so highly. Dunbar disappears in 1513. He probably fell, with other ecclesiastics, in the king's train at Flodden. His poems, by a strange fatality, disappeared about the same time, and remained lost to a country where they had been at first so famous, till Allan Ramsay discovered them in manuscript in a country-house near Edinburgh, nearly two hundred years afterwards.

From his poetry one would judge Dunbar to have been a

man of sound common-sense, enlivened with humor, and of generous sympathies coexisting with wide knowledge of the world. He preached and sought to practise the doctrine that it was best to be blithe; and he sang that lightness of heart was better than heaviness of purse. He had his graver moods, but was never misanthropical or despondent.

Dunbar's poetry admits of division into imitative and original verse. Chaucer was his acknowledged master. To his influence were owing the richly descriptive allegorical poem of the *Thrissil and the Rose*, and the even more ornate *Golden Targe*. Chaucer's methods, too, are visible in the vivid characterization and bold satire of the *Twa Merrit Women and the Wedo*—unique among his poems as being written in the Old English alliterative measure—as well as in the humorous tale of the *White Friars of Berwick*. These are imitations, but they equal the craft of the master. Another external influence on the art of Dunbar is traceable to the hymns of the Church. To their influence were owing such sweetly serious pieces as the *Passion of Christ*, the *Table of Confession*, *Ane Ballat of our Ladye*, and the general strain of the *Lament for the Makars*, with its soul-haunting refrain (taken from the Service for the Dead) "*Timor mortis conturbat me.*" But Dunbar had also the daring to burlesque the Church service humorously in *Andro Kennedy's Testament*—a macaronic set of verses—and almost blasphemously in the *Dirige to the King at Stirling*. Dunbar's original poems, properly so called, deal largely with his personal experiences. They describe the world in its daily-changing relations to the poet, and his reflections thereupon. They are for the most part short pieces, but extremely varied in theme and method of treatment. Some of them are satirical, some descriptive, some lyrical, and a great many are didactic. They include his *Friar of Tunland*, his *Devil's Inquest*, his *Petition of the Gray Horse*, his *Dream* and his *Headache*, with their Heine-like touches, his *Twa Drouthy Cummers*, and his description of the busy, noisy, unsavory High Street of Edinburgh; his *Dance in the Queen's Chamber*, his *Amends to the Tailors and Souters*,

and, best of all, his *Meditation in Winter*. This last is a fine poem, full of a tender, almost a tearful, sympathy with life and nature. It opens with a description of dark and drumlie days. The gloom of a Scottish winter so oppresses him that he has no heart for song or ballad. He cannot sleep at night, but turns and tosses restlessly through the long dark hours. His spirit shrinks within him at the sound of wind and hail and heavy showers driving past his window in the darkness. He thinks, like Burns in the *Vision*, upon his desolate and dependent condition. What a poor bargain he has driven with the world! Yet he will not despair. He will hold Hope and Truth fast to the end, and let Fortune work forth her unreasonable rage. Prudence and Age come to comfort him:

“And Prudence in my eir sayis ay,  
 ‘Quhy wald thow hald that<sup>1</sup> will away? <sup>1 what</sup>  
 Or craif that<sup>2</sup> thow may have no space, <sup>2 what</sup>  
 Thow tending to ane uther place,  
 A journey going everie day?’

“And than sayis Age, ‘My freind, cum neir,  
 And be nocht strange, I the<sup>3</sup> requier: <sup>3 thee</sup>  
 Cum, brodir, by the hand me tak,  
 Remember thow hes compt to mak  
 Off all thi tyme thow spendit heir.’”

Death comes, not to terrify, perhaps, but to disturb him:

“Syne Deid castis up his 3ettis<sup>4</sup> wyd, <sup>4 gates</sup>  
 Saying, ‘Thir oppin sall 3e abyd;  
 Albeid that thow were never sa stout,  
 Vndir this lyntall sall thow lowt<sup>5</sup>: <sup>5 stoop</sup>  
 Thair is nane vther way besyd.’”

—a Blake-like image! His mortality haunts him, as it haunted Charles Lamb, in winter. No New-Year’s festivities “may lat [*hinder*] me to remember this.” The concluding stanza is characteristic:

“3it, quhone<sup>6</sup> the nycht begynnys to schort, <sup>6 when</sup>  
 It dois my spreit sum part confort,



Off thoct oppressit with the schouris.  
 Cum, lustie symmer! with thy flouris,  
 That I may leif<sup>1</sup> in sum disport.” <sup>1</sup>*live*

Boldest of all his original poems is his *Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins*. Its wild imagery, its power of characterization, and its robust humor, touched with horror and sublimity, challenge comparison with the strongest of the humorous satires of Burns. It is indeed only on the lyrical side of his poetry that Dunbar is inferior to Burns.

“No stait in erd<sup>2</sup> heir standis sickir<sup>3</sup>;  
 As with the wynd wavis the wickir,<sup>4</sup> <sup>2</sup>*earth* <sup>3</sup>*sure*  
 So wavis this warldis vanite; <sup>4</sup>*willow*  
*Timor Mortis conturbat me.* . . .

“He takis the knychtis in to feild,  
 Anarmit<sup>5</sup> vnder helme et scheild;  
 Wictour he is at all melle<sup>6</sup>;  
*Timor Mortis conturbat me.* <sup>5</sup>*unarmed*  
<sup>6</sup>*mêlée*

“That strang vnmercifull tyrand  
 Takis on the moderis breist sowkand<sup>7</sup> <sup>7</sup>*sucking*  
 The bab, full of benignite;  
*Timor Mortis conturbat me.*

“He takis the campion in the stour,<sup>8</sup> <sup>8</sup>*dust of battle*  
 The capitane closit in the tour,  
 The lady in bour full of bewte;  
*Timor Mortis conturbat me.*”

—*Lament for the Makars.*

“My heid did zak<sup>9</sup> so zesternicht,  
 This day to mak<sup>10</sup> that I na nicht, <sup>9</sup>*ache*  
 So sair the magryme<sup>11</sup> dois me menzie,<sup>12</sup> <sup>10</sup>*write poetry*  
 Perseing my brow as ony ganzie,<sup>13</sup> <sup>11</sup>*headache* <sup>12</sup>*pain*  
 That scant I luik may on the licht. <sup>13</sup>*arrow*  
 And now, schir,<sup>14</sup> laitlie, eftir mess,<sup>15</sup> <sup>14</sup>*sir* <sup>15</sup>*mass*  
 To dyt,<sup>16</sup> thoct I begowthe to dress,<sup>17</sup> <sup>16</sup>*write* <sup>17</sup>*began*  
 The sentence lay full evill till find, [*to prepare*]  
 Vnsleipit in my heid behind,  
 Dullit in dulness and distres.  
 Full oft at morrow I wpryse,  
 Quhen that my curage sleipeing lyis;

For mirth, for menstrallie and play,  
 For din, nor danceing, nor deray,<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> *noisy fun*  
 It will nocht walkin<sup>2</sup> me no wise." <sup>2</sup> *awaken*

—*The Headache.*

"Me thoct fresche May befoir my bed vpstude,  
 In weid depaynt of mony diuerss hew,  
 Sobir, benyng, and full of mansuetude,<sup>3</sup> <sup>3</sup> *gentleness*  
 In brycht attair of flouris forgit<sup>4</sup> new, <sup>4</sup> *made*  
 Hevinly of color, quhyt, reid, broun and blew,  
 Balmit in dew, and gilt with Phebus bemys,  
 Quhill all the houss illumynit of hir lemys.<sup>5</sup> <sup>5</sup> *beams*

"'Slugird,' scho said, 'awalk annone for schame,  
 And in my honour sum thing thow go wryt;  
 The lork hes done the mirry day proclame,  
 To raiss vp luvaris with confort and delyt,  
 3it nocht inressis thy curage to indyt,  
 Quhois hairt sum tyme hes glaid and blisfull bene,  
 Sangis to mak vndir the levis grene.'

"'Quhairto,' quod I, 'sall I vpryss at morrow,  
 For in this May few birdis herd I sing?  
 Thai haif moir causs to weip and plane thair sorrow,  
 Thy air it is nocht holsum nor benyng;  
 Lord Eolus dois in thy sessone ring;<sup>6</sup> <sup>6</sup> *reign*  
 So busteous<sup>7</sup> ar the blastis of his horne, <sup>7</sup> *boisterous*  
 Amang thy bewis<sup>8</sup> to walk I haif forborne.' <sup>8</sup> *boughs*

"With that this lady sobirly did smyll,  
 And said, 'Vpryss, and do thy observance;  
 Thow did promyt,<sup>9</sup> in Mayis lusty whyle, <sup>9</sup> *promise*  
 For to discryve the Ross of most plesance.  
 Go se the birdis how thay sing and dance,  
 Illumynit our with orient skyis brycht,  
 Annamyllit richely with new asur lycht.'"

—*The Thistle and the Rose.*

The life of **Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey** (1516–1547), is one of the romances of English history. He was the grandson of that Howard who, for the victory at Flodden Field, was made Duke of Norfolk. Among his cousins were two queens, wives of Henry VIII., Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard. At the age of ten he became page or

cup-bearer to the king. He was still under age when he married Lady Frances Vere, a daughter of the Earl of Oxford. In 1542 he took part in a hostile expedition into Scotland under his father, the Duke of Norfolk, and was present at the siege of Kelso. In the subsequent wars with France he distinguished himself as a soldier; but was overpowered by numbers at St. Etienne in 1546, and shortly afterwards recalled and apprehended on a charge of treason. The proof of the charge was mainly founded on his quartering the royal arms of Edward the Confessor among his armorial bearings. It was in vain to show that both his father and grandfather had used them before him; Henry VIII. had determined upon his death, and he fell a victim to the brutal jealousy of that despot, cut off in the flower of his young manhood, and leaving behind a name for learning, chivalrous feeling, and courtly accomplishments scarcely, if at all, inferior to that of Sir Philip Sidney. The romantic tradition, invented by Nash towards the close of the sixteenth century, of his passion for the unknown Lady Geraldine, his knight-errantry in Italy in celebration of her virtues, and his strange adventures there, with the story of the magical mirror, have been woven by Scott, in the song of Fitztraver, into *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*.

The verses of Surrey remained unpublished till ten years after his death, when (1557) they appeared in the first collection of popular English poetry, known as *Tottel's Miscellany*, but more properly called *Songs and Sonnets* by different authors. He wrote under the influence of the Italian school of Petrarch, and his great service to English verse lies in his introduction of artistic forms which checked the tendency to doggerel—the inevitable destiny of such helter-skelter rhyming as Skelton had popularized. With Wyatt, to whom he stood in the relation of a disciple, he brought in the sonnet form; but he has a far better ear than his master, and indeed the fluency of Surrey's lines, and the purity of his expression, are a surprise to the modern reader. One notable thing remains to be said to the credit of Surrey: he was the originator of blank-verse, first used in

English poetry in his translation of two books of the *Æneid*—the second and the fourth. It must be added that many passages of his translation show his indebtedness to the Scottish version of Gavin Douglas.

“Windsor ! where I, in lust and joy,  
With a king's son my childish years did pass,  
In greater feast than Priam's son of Troy :

“Where each sweet place returns a taste full sour !  
The large green courts where we were wont to hove,<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> *loiter*,  
With eyes cast up into the Maiden Tower,  
And easy sighs such as folk draw in love. . . .

“The secret groves which oft we made resound  
Of pleasant plaint, and of our ladies' praise,  
Recording oft what grace each one had found,  
What hope of speed, what dread of long delays :

“The wild forest, the clothed holts<sup>2</sup> with green, <sup>2</sup> *groves*  
With reins availed<sup>3</sup> and swift ybreathed horse ; <sup>3</sup> *let fall*  
With cry of hounds and merry blasts between,  
Where we did chase the fearful hart of force.

“The wide vales, eke, that harboured us each night,  
Wherewith, alas, reviveth in my breast  
The sweet accord such sleeps as yet delight,  
The pleasant dreams, the quiet bed of rest ;

“The secret thoughts imparted with such trust,  
The wanton talk, the divers change of play,  
The friendship sworn, each promise kept so just ;  
Wherewith we passed the winter night away.”  
—*Prisoner in Windsor.*

“I saw the little boy,  
In thought how oft that he  
Did wish of God, to scape the rod,  
A tall young man to be.

“The young man eke that feels  
His bones with pains opprest,  
How he would be a rich old man,  
To live and lie at rest.

“The rich old man that sees  
 His end draw on so sore,  
 How he would be a boy again,  
 To live so much the more.

“Wherat full oft I smiled,  
 To see how all these three,  
 From boy to man, from man to boy,  
 Would chop and change degree;

“And musing thus, I think  
 The case is very strange,  
 That man from wealth, to live in wo,  
 Doth ever seek to change.”

—*No Age Content with His own Estate.*

#### OTHER POETS

It is known from Dunbar's *Lament for the Makars* that **Henryson** was dead before 1508, and from a different authority that he was principal school-master, and probably a clergyman, a graduate, and a notary, in the “old grey town” of Dunfermline. His poetry shows the influence of Chaucer; his *Testament of Cresseid*, indeed, is intended as a sequel to the English master's romance of *Troilus and Cresseide*. He wrote, with too little brevity, metrical versions of thirteen of *Æsop's Moral Fables*, and an allegorical poem, *The Bluidy Serk*. His *Robin and Makyn* is a very pleasant pastoral, the first of this kind of poetry in our literature, and may take rank with his version of *Æsop's fable of The Uplandis Mouse and the Burges Mouse* as the best specimen of his art. He reveals a graceful fancy, a playful humor, and a delicate power of observation, minutely clear and faithful to the life.

“One time when she was full and unfute-sair,<sup>1</sup>      <sup>1</sup> *un-footsore*  
 She took in mind her sister uponland,  
 And longit for to hear of her weifare—  
 To see what life she had under the wand :  
 Barefoot alone, with pikestaff in her hand,  
 As poor pilgrim she passit out of town,  
 To seek her sister both o'er dale and down.

“Forth many wilsome<sup>2</sup> wayis can she walk,      <sup>2</sup> *wild*  
 Through moss and moor, through bankis, busk and breir,  
 She ran cryand, till she came to a balk,<sup>3</sup>      <sup>3</sup> *ridge*

'Cum forth to me, my awin sister dear,  
 Cry "Peip" anis.' With that the Mouse could hear,  
 And knew her voice, as kinnisman will do,  
 By verray kind, and forth she came her to."

—*The Uplandis Mouse and the Burges Mouse.*

Gavin Douglas (1475–1522), a younger son of Archibald, Earl of Angus, familiarly known in Scottish history as Bell-the-Cat, and of whom Scott, in *Marmion*, makes his grim father say,

"Thanks to St. Botham, son of mine  
 Save Gawain ne'er could pen a line!"

was educated for the Church, and filled successively the posts of Rector of Hawick, Provost of St. Giles's Cathedral, and Bishop of Dunkeld. It was before he became a bishop that he produced the work on which his fame as a writer and scholar rests. This work consists of original allegorical stories and translations from the classics. His version of part of Ovid has long been lost, but his *Æneid* (1513) is a monument of industry and scholarship, and displays no inconsiderable amount of literary skill. It is the first British translation of a Latin classic, and was the work of little more than a year. Its chief interest now lies in the metrical prefaces or prologues with which some of the books are introduced; these prefaces are partly descriptive of Scottish scenery as modified by weather and the season, and show in Douglas a keener color-sense and scarcely less picturesque a phraseology than one finds in Thomson. To the English and Scottish philologist Douglas's version of the *Æneid* is of extreme value, for his language is copious, and the Latin original is a guide to the meaning of archaic word and idiom. Douglas's original works consist of *The Palace of Honour*, written in the first year of the century, and *King Heart*, probably of a later date—both of them bearing considerable resemblance to the great allegories of Bunyan, the former to *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the latter to *The Holy War*. But it is impossible that Bunyan could ever have heard of them.

"Bank, bray, and boddum blanschit wox and bare,  
 For gourl weddir<sup>1</sup> growit beistis hare, <sup>1</sup>*stormy weather*  
 The wynd maid waif the rede wede on the dyk,  
 Bedowin<sup>2</sup> in donkis depe was euery sike:<sup>3</sup> <sup>2</sup>*muddy* <sup>3</sup>*ditch*  
 Ouer craggis and the frontis of rochys sere  
 Hang grete yse-shokkillis lang as ony spere :  
 The grund stude barrane, widderit, dosk and gray,  
 Herbis, flouris and gerssis wallowit<sup>4</sup> away: <sup>4</sup>*grass shrunk*



Woddis, forestis with naket bewis blout<sup>1</sup>      <sup>1</sup> *bare*  
 Stude stripit of thare wede in euery hout ;<sup>2</sup>      <sup>2</sup> *holt*  
 Sa bustouslie Boreas his bugill blew,  
 The dere full derne<sup>3</sup> doun in the dalis drew :      <sup>3</sup> *hidden*  
 Small birdis flockand throw thik ronny<sup>4</sup> thrang,      <sup>4</sup> *shrubs*  
 In chirmynge and with cheping changit thare sang,  
 Sekand hidlis and hirny<sup>5</sup> thame to hyde      <sup>5</sup> *dens and holes*  
 Fra ferefull thuddis of the tempestuus tyde:  
 The water-lynnys rowtis, and euery lynd  
 Quhislit and brayit of the souchand wynd:  
 Pure lauboraris and byssy husband-men  
 Went weet and wery, draglit in the fen."

—*Prologue to the Seventh Book of the Æneid.*

A vigorous and voluble writer of verse rather than a poet, **David Lindsay** (1490-1557), a cadet of the family of Lord Lindsay of the Byres, was born at The Mount, near Cupar in Fife, educated at St. Andrews, and shortly thereafter employed in the royal household at Holyrood, apparently as tutor or guardian to the young King James V. Scott committed an anachronism in describing Lindsay in *Marmion* as of mature age in 1513, and bearing the dignity of knighthood and the office and garb of Lyon King-at-arms. Lindsay was then only about twenty-two, and his title and herald's rank came twelve or more years later. His life was a busy one, partly spent at court, partly on foreign embassies, and partly in the retirement of one or other of his country-seats, or in attendance upon his representative duties in the Scottish Parliament. He sympathized with the Reformers, whose work he aided and hastened by satirical exposures of the ignorance, hypocrisy, indolence, and licentiousness of the Romish clergy. Robust, often coarse, humor, a large share of vigorous common-sense, and a strong power and constant habit of speaking his mind without needing or caring to pick his words, are the chief characteristics of Lindsay's verse. He wrote a *Dream*, involving a vision of the heavenly and the earthly paradise ; several *Complaints to the King* ; *The Monarchie*, involving a history of the world ; the *History of Squire Meldrum* ; and a satire of *The Three Estates*. The last is the most remarkable of his productions. It is a morality with farcical *immoralities* interspersed, and has for its object an exposure of the corrupt state of king, lords, and clergy. It is the earliest specimen extant of Scottish dramatic art, and seems to have been popular in its day as an acting open-air drama. Its value now is historical : it offers what seems to have been a true picture of the vicious lives of both clergy and laity in the earlier half of the sixteenth century. It shows the need and the warrant for a Reformation.

**Sir Thomas Wyatt** (1503-1542), born in Allington Castle in Kent, was educated at Cambridge, became a favorite of Henry VIII., and was employed by him in diplomatic missions abroad. With Surrey he instituted a new departure in English poetry. Breaking away from imitation of Chaucer on the one hand, and refusing to adopt the formless jumble of Skeltonic verse on the other, he sought his models in Italy, and composed sonnets and stanzas, but with nothing like the smoothness of Surrey. He wrote satires and amatory verses. His poems were first published in *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557).

**George Gascoigne** (1536-1577) was the son of an Essex knight, who disinherited him for his prodigality. He was educated at Cambridge, studied law at Gray's Inn, and was twice elected to Parliament. He saw service as a soldier in the Low Countries, where he fought with some distinction against the Spaniards. Settling at last in England, he busied himself with literature, and was present at Kenilworth when Elizabeth paid her famous visit to that magnificent castle; he is said to have designed part of the scenic and poetical entertainment on that occasion. He is memorable as the author of *The Steel Glass*, the first of our regular satires, written in blank-verse; a comedy from the Italian of Ariosto, called *The Supposes*, and a tragedy from the Greek of Euripides, called *The Jocasta*—both acted in 1566; also a morality, *The Glass of Government*; and, in addition to several short miscellaneous pieces, a poem bearing the fantastic title of *Flowers, Herbs, and Weeds*. He is a lively writer, little inferior to Sackville.

“Sing lullaby, as women do,  
     Wherewith they bring their babes to rest,  
 And lullaby can I sing too,  
     As womanly as can the best.  
 With lullaby they still the child;  
 And if I be not much beguiled,  
 Full many wanton babes have I  
 Which must be stilled with lullaby.

“First lullaby, my youthful years,  
     It is now time to go to bed,  
 For crooked age and hoary hairs  
     Have won the hav’n within my head:  
 With lullaby, then, youth, be still,  
 With lullaby content thy will,  
 Since courage quails and comes behind,  
 Go sleep and so beguile thy mind.”  
     —*Lullaby of a Lover.*

**Thomas Sackville** (1536-1608), born of an ancient family at Buckhurst in Sussex, was educated at both Oxford and Cambridge, and entered the Middle Temple ; but turning away from the practice of law, he devoted his early manhood to literature, and soon acquired distinction as a writer. His connection with literature is manifest to us in *The Mirror for Magistrates*—a poetical work which he had planned as a warning to rulers, and to which various writers contributed, himself among the number. It consists of the tragical life-stories of illustrious Englishmen, told by themselves, and is thus a kind of later *Falls of Princes*. Sackville's contributions are the opening *Induction* and *The Complaint of Buckingham*. He employs the seven-lined stanza of Chaucer, and writes with a fulness, fluency, and stateliness which prepare us for the new poetry of Spenser. The *Induction* especially reveals a powerful imagination (roused doubtless by contact with Dante), capable of sublime results ; the personifications are lifelike, and the natural descriptions both fresh and true. Sackville has the great honor of having written (with some help from Thomas Norton) the first English tragedy, *Gorboduc*, acted in 1561, published under the title of *Ferrex and Porrex* ten years later. The dialogue is in blank-verse—not always very smooth ; there are choruses, as in the Greek tragedy ; and there are long rhetorical speeches, and a great want of that prime essential of a drama—action. The story is taken from ancient British history. It was not on the lines of *Gorboduc* that English tragedy developed under Marlowe and Shakespeare. Yet there were persistent attempts to force English tragedy upon those lines both before and after Shakespeare.

Sackville became Lord Buckhurst in his thirty-first year, and was created Earl of Dorset early in the reign of James I. His connection with literature may be said to have ended before he received the first of those titles. He now turned to politics, and as a statesman rose to fill the highest post in the government of the country ; in succession to Burleigh he became Lord High Treasurer, an office equivalent to the modern Premier. He died suddenly at the council-table in 1608. That was the year of Milton's birth.

“Thence come we to the horror and the hell,  
 The large great kingdoms, and the dreadful reign  
 Of Pluto in his throne where he did dwell,  
 The wide waste places, and the huge plain,  
 The wailings, shrieks, and sundry sorts of pain,  
 The sighs, the sobs, the deep and deadly groan ;  
 Earth, air, and all resounding plaint and moan.”

—*The Mirror for Magistrates*.

## PROSE WRITERS

The first eminent prose writer of the Renaissance in England was **Sir Thomas More** (1480–1535). He was the son of a judge of the King's Bench, educated at Oxford, and, entering the legal profession, speedily rose to positions of great trust and influence. His political career belongs to history. In 1529 he was Lord Chancellor. His devotion to the papal form of church government was the occasion of his execution; he was accused of traitorously denying to Henry VIII. the title of Supreme Head of the Church in England. More was not only himself a great scholar and a shrewd and profound thinker, but the friend of scholars and thinkers, and a patron of learning. He was intimate with Colet, and Erasmus was his guest at his house at Chelsea. He was a man of easy and genial manners, of enlightened views, humane and kind-hearted, witty, even jocular, fond of music, and a great favorite with his children. In his intercourse with them he threw to the winds the reserve which was then in universal practice among parents towards their children. "He loved teaching them, and lured them to their deeper studies by the coins and curiosities he had gathered in his cabinet. He was as fond of their pets and their games as his children themselves, and would take grave scholars and statesmen into the garden to see his girls' rabbit-hutches, or to watch the gambols of their favourite monkey." He is memorable in literary history for two works—a *History of Edward V. and Richard III.*, written (in 1513) in a pure and clear style—the first, indeed, of our modern histories; and *Utopia*, a social and political tale of a perfectly governed and happy people inhabiting the land of Nowhere.

*Utopia* was written in Latin in 1516, and not rendered into English till a generation later. The book shows More's sense of the need for a reformation of the laws and usages of Christian society. It advocates, with a sagacity and breadth of view that would do honor to a nineteenth-century

statesman, changes and institutions in political and social life which we have only recently adopted, or are yet in hope of adopting. It discusses property and the labor question, education and the public health, the criminal laws, temperance and recreation, religion and conscience, and it proposes solutions for the problems which those subjects involve when viewed in connection with the State and legislation. The tale of *Utopia* is put into the mouth of a seaman, and is prefaced with an account of the circumstances in which More is supposed to have heard it. It was while he was on a diplomatic mission to the Low Countries that he fell under the fascinating spell of this more Ancient Mariner, who had been the fellow-voyager of Amerigo Vespucci, and who, "upon a bench covered with green turves in my garden," told the marvellous adventures of his desertion by Vespucci, his wanderings over the New World below the equator, and his discovery of Utopia and its satisfied people. In the following approved style of the skilful story-teller the reader is placed in a position to listen to the narrative: "On a certain day, when I had heard mass in Our Lady's Church, which is the fairest, the most gorgeous and curious church of building in all the city of Antwerp, and also most frequented of people, and service being over I was ready to go home to my lodgings, I chanced to espy my friend Peter Gilles talking with a certain stranger, a man well stricken in age, with a black, sunburnt face, a large beard, and a cloke cast trimly about his shoulders, whom by his favour and apparell forthwith I judged to be a mariner."

It ought also to be mentioned that, in a manner strangely at variance with the spirit of religious toleration pleaded for in *Utopia*, More launched several polemics against Tyndale and "the pestilent sect of Luther."

If More was the first man of genius in England to attempt the production of an English style in prose, **Roger Ascham** (1515-1586), though not more than a scholar and a man of talent, was probably the next; and he deserves especial credit in undertaking the work, from the purity of his motive and the

difficulty of the task. He hated euphuism and Italian fashions in English speech as "an enchantment of Circe," and he found it "more easier" to write in Latin and Greek, and "more fit for his trade," than to compose in the English tongue. Yet he wrote "his English matter in the English tongue for Englishmen." His "English matter" was a practical treatise in form of a dialogue upon archery, called *Toxophilus*, and an educational treatise entitled the *Schoolmaster*. Twenty-three years lay between those books, the former having been published in 1544, and the latter written in the year of his death. He wrote a pure, if rather stiff and formal, English style, and was at least free from lumbering parentheses and classical pedantries. Both books were of educational value—for archery was recommended as a healthy diversion for the studious. Ascham's scheme of education went on the principle of a sound body for the sound mind, and no more sensible remark has ever been uttered on the training of youth than the following statement of his: "As little study getteth little learning or none at all, so the most study getteth not the most learning of all; for a man's wit, preoccupied in earnest study, must as well be recreated with some honest pastime (as the body, fore-laboured, must be refreshed with sleep and quietness, or else it cannot endure very long)." Ascham's prose is still pleasant and instructive reading. The story of his life is, in the main, that of a quiet scholar and teacher. Born in Yorkshire, he went at the age of fifteen to Cambridge, then, under the impulse of the New Learning, more famous for Greek than Oxford. There he became in succession scholar, fellow, lecturer, and public orator. He was employed in diplomatic business in the reign of Edward VI.; he acted as tutor to the Princess Elizabeth, and filled the office of secretary to both Mary and Elizabeth in succession. He enjoyed several pensions and the personal favor of four sovereigns. It was to Henry VIII., whose patronage of learning should never be overlooked, that Ascham dedicated his first work, and it was from him he received his first pension. He was never molested for his religion, yet he was and remained a stanch Protestant.



## OTHER PROSE WRITERS

Sir Thomas Mallory is worthy of remembrance for his epic prose romance *Morte d'Arthur*, a compilation of legends of the ancient British Prince Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, which has proved a veritable storehouse of the materials of art down to the *Idylls of the King*. The work and the traditions it preserves have had a strange fascination for many of the leading poets of our literary history—such as Spenser, Skakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Wordsworth, Scott, and Tennyson. The *Morte d'Arthur* was finished in 1470, in the reign of Edward IV., but not published till 1485.

It was printed by William Caxton (1412?-1492?), the first English printer. He was originally from Kent, and was a mercer by trade before he became interested in the publication of books. Before he became a printer he was a copyist of MSS. in the service of the Duchess of Burgundy, and he was nearly sixty before he saw and acquired the art of printing from movable types. In 1474 he came home to England after an absence of thirty-five years of his manhood, bringing with him a printing-press and specimens of its work. He planted his press in the Almonry at Westminster, and set at once to work to supply at a cheap rate books of instruction and entertainment for the people. Divines, nobles, and gentle folks lent him books to copy; he himself translated and compiled, and there was scarcely an old English book of popular interest, or indeed of any value, that he did not reproduce. The *Game and Play of Chess* was the first book printed in England. He printed Chaucer's poetry and Mallory's *Tales*, for both of which, and for all romantic stories and poetry whatever, he had a great liking; and by doing so he kept alive and quickened the public interest in poetry, and furnished later and contemporary poets with English models and national sources of inspiration. His one great aim was to be understood of ordinary folks, and for that purpose he employed in his own translations and compilations (some sixty in all) the common current speech. He shares, therefore, in the honor of giving fixity to the English language. The type he used was black-letter; and of his numerous translations the epic fable of *Reynard the Fox*, taken from a Dutch version, may be singled out as a popular specimen.

William Tyndale (1484?-1536), a native of Gloucestershire, educated at Oxford, was a clergyman of distinguished learning and piety, who, adopting the Reformed doctrines, was forced to flee to the Continent to escape persecution. He visited Luther, and, settling at Antwerp, translated the New Testament into ver-

naacular English. This was in 1525. It was speedily circulated far and wide in England, in spite of every effort by Henry VIII., Wolsey, and Sir Thomas More to suppress it, no one offering a bitterer opposition than More. Tyndale next began a translation of the Old Testament, completing and publishing in 1530 the first five books. Miles Coverdale, who helped him with the Pentateuch, completed on the lines laid down by Tyndale the translation of the Old Testament, and was the first to publish the whole Bible, in 1535. Re-edited, it appeared in 1539 as Cromwell's Bible, and again in 1540 as Cranmer's. It was this Bible, which was placed in every parish church in England, which found its way into Scotland and Protestant Ireland, and which, revised in the reign of James I., and published in 1611 as the Authorized Version, passed with the Pilgrim Fathers into New England, that more than any other book fixed the standard of our English speech once for all. "England," says Green, "became the people of a book, and that book was the Bible." The purity of Tyndale's English is remarkable; it has been calculated that the Authorized Version, which follows Tyndale's translation very closely, consists of about 6000 separate words, and of these only about 250 are not now in current use. No better proof could be given of "the influence his translation of the Bible has had in preserving the old speech of England." Henry VIII. is responsible for the martyrdom of Tyndale; by his influence a warrant was got in Brussels by which Tyndale was seized at Antwerp, and there strangled and burned in 1536, praying at the moment of his death that God would "open the King of England's eyes."

Hugh Latimer (1470-1555), a native of Leicestershire and educated at Cambridge and Padua, was at first a Catholic clergyman, but was converted to Protestantism, and by his frank, familiar, and racy style of speech became the most popular preacher of his day, and a great power in the Reformation movement. He got into the good graces of Henry VIII. by pronouncing in favor of the divorce of Queen Katharine; and though he differed from the king on many religious points, bluffly remonstrating with him for his opposition to the English Bible, he still retained Henry's favor, and was promoted to the see of Worcester in 1535. But later in the reign he was thrown into the Tower. Liberated under Edward VI., he was re-offered his bishopric, but chose rather the practical work of a preacher, and went about rousing in quiet households throughout the land that zeal for a religious life which marks the English Reformation. He suffered death at the stake at Oxford in the reign of Mary, bravely encouraging himself and his fellow-martyr to endure the last agonies in the memorable words: "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man;

we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." He wrote many sermons, most of them printed after his death; they exhibit the homeliness, the humor, and the sturdy common-sense and courage which we associate with Luther. His sermon on *The Ploughers* and his *Seven Sermons on the Lord's Prayer* were long popular. His autobiographical revelations are not the least interesting part of his sermons. "My father," he writes, "was a yeoman, and had no lands of his own, only he had a farm of £3 or £4 a-year at the uttermost, and hereupon he tilled so much as kept half-a-dozen men. He had walk for an hundred sheep, and my mother milked thirty kine. . . . He kept me to school, or else I had not been able to have preached before the king's majesty now. He married my sisters with £5 or 20 nobles apiece, so that he brought them up in godliness and fear of God. He kept hospitality for his poor neighbours. And some alms he gave to the poor, and all this he did of the said farm."

The Scottish prose of this period is greatly inferior to the English. The life of **John Knox** (1505-1572) was one of public activity rather than of literary thought. It belongs to Scottish ecclesiastical politics. He was born at Gifford, an East Lothian village at the foot of Lammermoor, and was educated at Glasgow, and ordained a priest of the Catholic faith. At the age of thirty-seven he announced himself a Protestant. In 1547 he was seized at St. Andrews, and condemned to the French galleys for two years. He then preached in England; but on the outbreak of persecution under Mary he retired to Geneva, where he published in 1558 his *First Blast against the Monstrous Regimen(t) of Women*—meaning Mary Tudor and Mary of Guise. He returned finally to Scotland in 1559, and took an active and leading part in the settlement of that country on a Protestant basis. It was truly said of him that "he never feared the face of man." He wrote a rather rambling, but in the main trustworthy, *History of the Scottish Reformation*—published twelve years after his death.

**John Foxe** (1517-1587), a native of Boston, and a student of Oxford, was successively a family tutor, a starving outcast in London, a Protestant fugitive at Antwerp, a corrector for the press at Basle, and a prebendary of Salisbury Cathedral. He wrote "The Book of Martyrs," which bears the title of *Acts and Monuments of these Latter Perilous Days*, at first in Latin, afterwards (1563) in English. His history is veracious, but not always true; it was immensely popular, and a great favorite with Bunyan.

**Ralph** or **Raphael Holinshed**, who died in 1580, is memorable for his *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (published in 1577). He was the principal author of those *Chronicles*, but was assisted

by **John Stow** and several others, and incorporated into his book the Scottish history of Hector Boece, and the Irish history of Giraldus Cambrensis. It was from Holinshed's version of Boece's history that Shakespeare got the materials for his magnificent tragedy of *Macbeth*.

#### DRAMATIC WRITERS

The first faint dawnings of the English drama, which was destined in the next period to rise so suddenly and so gloriously, are visible in this period in the *Interludes* of **John Heywood** (1506?–1565). These are a species of comic farcical entertainments, in which the personages represent contemporary characters in real life; but the special service which Heywood rendered to the future comic drama lay in his separation of those farcical interludes from the moralities, and his presentation of them as independent dramatic pieces. Out of his *Interludes* grew English comedy. Heywood was a pious Roman Catholic who endured persecution in the reigns of Edward VI. and Elizabeth. It was mostly in his early manhood that he produced, for the amusement of the court of Henry VIII., the popular *Interludes* which make his name memorable in our literary annals. His *Merry Play between the Husband, the Wife, and the Priest* was acted in 1532. It is not known when his *Merry Interlude of the Four P's* was written, but it seems to have been very popular. It presents four characters, a Palmer, a Pardoner, a 'Potecary, and a Pedler, who dispute who shall tell the biggest lie; the victory goes to the Palmer, who surprises the others into the exclamation that they never heard a greater falsehood in their lives when he slips out the remark that he never yet knew a woman lose her patience.

But the writer of the first regular English comedy, *Ralph Roister Doister*, was **Nicholas Udall** (1506–1564), a flogging school-master of St. Paul's and Eton. It is in five acts, subdivided into scenes, and is a representation of the middle-class London life of its day. It is written in rhyme, in a peculiar limping measure of four accents, without any re-

gard to the number of syllables, and is varied with songs. If the mirth of the piece be a little dull, there is at least little coarseness. It is the story of the wooing of a certain Widow Constance by her two suitors, Ralph Roister Doister and Gawin Goodluck; the former is a conceited fool, the dupe of Matthew Merry Greek; the latter is the accepted lover. The fun reaches its climax when the widow, with the assistance of her maids, uses actual violence to get rid of Ralph and his followers; but all ends happily at last. The play was first printed in 1566, but was written not later than 1551.

**Thomas Sackville's** important contribution to English drama—the tragedy of *Gorboduc*, or *Ferrex and Porrex*—written in conjunction with Thomas Norton, a London barrister, and first acted in 1561, has already been noticed (p. 68).

**John Still** (1543?–1608) continued in *Gammer Gurton's Needle* the comic drama which Udall had begun, but infused into it a strong element of farce, and disfigured his dialogue with much foul language. The measure is much the same as that of *Ralph Roister Doister*, but the lines flow more steadily, and there is more action in the piece. The plot is simple enough: Gammer Gurton, while repairing her man Hodge's attire, loses her needle, and, in the course of her efforts to find it, is drawn into a quarrel with her neighbors by the mischievous Diccon; she discovers it at last where she had been using it—in the breeches she had been mending. The best thing in the play is the song of *Back and side go bare*, written with genuine bacchanalian abandon. Still, who afterwards became Bishop of Bath and Wells, seems to have been ashamed of his youthful sallies, lyrical and dramatic (they belong to 1565), and, without actually disowning them, left them unacknowledged.

Another play-writing bishop, **John Bale** (1495–1563), may be mentioned here for his drama of *King John*—the first of

our historical plays, but spoiled by the intermixture of allegorical personages.

**Skelton's** connection with the primitive drama has already been pointed out (p. 55).

# I. A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF AUTHORS FROM 1400 TO 1580

- 1372 ?-1454. Thomas Occleve, poet.
- 1375-1446 ? John Lydgate, poet.
- 1420—. Andrew Wyntoun, (Scottish) metrical chronicler.
- 1394-1437. James I., King of Scotland, poet.
- 1395-1485. Sir John Fortescue, legal and political writer.
- 1460—. Blind Harry, the Scottish minstrel, author of a rude epic of Wallace (much admired by Burns).
- 1470—. Sir Thomas Mallory, legendary compiler.
- 1412 ?-1492. William Caxton the printer, miscellaneous writer.
- 1440 ?-1508 ? Robert Henryson, (Scottish) poet.
- 1450 ?-1512 ? Robert Fabian, chronicler.
- 1459-1535. John Fisher, Bishop, theological writer.
- 1460-1529. John Skelton, poet.
- 1460 ?-1513. William Dunbar, (Scottish) poet.
- 1465-1536. Hector Boece (Boethius), (Scottish) historian (in Latin).
- 1467-1533. John Bouchier, Lord Berners, translator and poet.
- 1470-1555. Hugh Latimer, Bishop, theological writer.
- 1475-1522. Gavin Douglas, Bishop, (Scottish) poet.
- 1480-1535. Sir Thomas More, political and historical writer.
- 1483 ?-1512 ? Stephen Hawes, poet.
- 1484 ?-1536. William Tyndale, translator of Scripture.
- 1485-1565. Miles Coverdale, translator of Scripture.
- 1488-1551. Alexander Barclay, poet.
- 1490-1557. Sir David Lindsay, (Scottish) dramatic and satirical writer of verse.
- ? -1555. Nicholas Ridley, Bishop, ecclesiastical writer.
- 1528—. William Roy, satirist.
- 1495-1563. John Bale, Bishop, historian and dramatist.
- 1496-1586. Sir Richard Maitland, (Scottish) poet and historian.
- 1503-1542. Sir Thomas Wyatt, poet.
- 1504-1575. Matthew Parker, Archbishop, ecclesiastical writer.
- 1505-1572. John Knox, (Scottish) ecclesiastical writer, etc.
- 1506?-1565. John Heywood, writer of interludes.
- 1506-1552. John Leland, antiquarian writer.



- 1506-1582. George Buchanan, (Scottish) poet, historian, etc. (in Latin).  
 —1536—. John Bellenden, (Scottish) historian.  
 1506-1564. Nicholas Udall, dramatist.  
 1515?-1568. Roger Ascham, educational writer.  
 1516-1547. Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, poet.  
 1516 ?-1580. Thomas Tusser, poet.  
 1517-1587. John Foxe, annalist of the Martyrs.  
 1519-1563. Nicholas Grimoald, poet.  
 ?-1580. Raphael Holinshed, chronicler.  
 1519-1583. Edmund Grindal, Archbishop, theologian, etc.  
 1522-1571. John Jewell, Bishop, theologian.  
 1527-1605. John Stow, chronicler.  
 1536-1577. George Gascoigne, poet.  
 1536-1608. Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, dramatic poet.  
 1543-1608. John Still, Bishop, dramatist and poet.

Famous scholars of the period, not known as authors, were : William Grocyn (1442-1519), John Colet (1466-1519), Thomas Linacre (died 1524), Sir John Cheke (1514-1557), and James Crichton (Scottish), styled "The Admirable" (1560-1583).

## II. A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF WORKS PRODUCED BETWEEN 1400 AND 1580

- 1400-1420. Lydgate's Troy Book ; and Wyntoun's Cronykil (Chronicle) of Scotland.  
 1422-1505. The Paston Letters (correspondence of a country family).  
 1423. The King's Quair.  
 1425. Lydgate's Falls of Princes.  
 1430. Blind Harry's Wallace ; Fortescue's Absolute and Limited Monarchy. Also, about this time, such anonymous ballads as Chevy Chase, etc.  
 1470. Mallory's Morte d'Arthur finished.  
 1471. Caxton prints his translation of The History of Troy at Cologne.  
 1474. The Game of Chess, printed by Caxton (the first book ever printed in England).  
 1475. Henryson's Robin and Makyne. Also, about this time, such anonymous ballads as The Nut-Brown Maid, etc.  
 1485. Morte d'Arthur printed.  
 1500. Skelton's Bowge (*rewards*) of Court, not later than this.

1501. Gavin Douglas's Palace of Honour.
1503. Dunbar's The Thistle and the Rose.
1506. Barclay's The Castle of Labour.
1507. Skelton's Book of Philip Sparrow.
1508. Dunbar's The Golden Targe ; Barclay's The Ship of Fools.
1513. Gavin Douglas's Scottish translation of The Æneid ; More's History of Edward V. (first printed 1557).
1516. More's Utopia (in Latin)—translated by Ralph Robinson in 1551.
1517. Hawes's Pastime of Pleasure.
1523. Froissart translated by Lord Berners.
1525. Tyndale's translation of New Testament.
1528. The Dream, of Sir David Lindsay.
1532. Heywood's Plays.
1535. Coverdale's Bible ; Lindsay's satire of The Three Estates first acted (printed five years later).
1536. Tyndale's New Testament printed in England ; Udall's Ralph Roister Doister written about this time.
1537. Coverdale's Bible printed in England.
1539. Coverdale's (" Cromwell's ") Bible.
1540. Cranmer's (The Great) Bible.
1544. Ascham's Toxophilus ; Bale's Death of Sir John Oldcastle.
1549. Sternhold and Hopkins's Psalms in English metre.
- 1549-1552. The English Prayer Book, edited by Cranmer.
1552. Latimer's Sermons on the Lord's Prayer, etc. [**? Edmund Spenser** born.]
1553. Earl of Surrey's translation of The Æneid (Books II. and IV.) ; Lindsay's Monarchie.
1557. Tusser's Hundred Points of Good Husbandry ; Tottel's Miscellany of Uncertain Authors (poems by Surrey, Wyatt, Grimoald, Lord Berners, and others).
1561. Gorboduc (Ferrex and Porrex) acted ; authors, Sackville and Morton. Stowe's English Chronicle. [**Francis Bacon** born.]
1562. Thomas Phaer's Virgil, Books I.-IX.
1563. Mirror for Magistrates, 2d edition (the 1st in 1559), with Sackville's Induction ; Foxe's Acts and Monuments (Book of Martyrs).
- [1564. **William Shakespeare** born.]
1565. Golding's translation of Ovid (Metam., Books I.-IV.) ; Gorboduc, first printed tragedy ; also, not later, John Still's Gammer Gurton's Needle written.

- 1566. Ralph Roister Doister, first printed comedy ; The Palace of Pleasure (Tales from the Italian), by William Painter.
- 1568. Parker's (The Bishops') Bible.
- 1570. Ascham's The Schoolmaster.
- 1574. Parker's Lives of the Seventy Archbishops of Canterbury.
- 1575. Golding's Ovid's Metamorphoses (completed).
- 1576. Gascoigne's Steel Glass. Also, Paradise of Dainty Devices—a very popular poetical collection often reprinted.
- 1577. Holinshed's Chronicles (first edition).
- 1578. Frobisher's Voyage, by Churchyard.
- 1579. Lyly's Euphues ; North's translation of Plutarch ; Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar.
- 1580-1581. The Arcadia, and The Apology for Poetry (Defence of Poesy), written by Sir Philip Sidney.

## 1580-1660

### FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE REIGN OF ELIZABETH TO THE RESTORATION

THE range is over eighty years, and extends from the middle of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the last of the Tudors, to the accession of a Scottish dynasty, and onward through the brief interval of the time of the Commonwealth to the recall of monarchy and the Stuarts. The succession of rulers in the period is as follows: TUDOR—Elizabeth; STUARTS—James I., Charles I.; FOR THE COMMONWEALTH—Oliver Cromwell, Richard Cromwell. The chief events of history, affecting more or less the literary growth of the period, are here presented in order under the successive rulers:

**Second half of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1580-1603.**—Activity of the Jesuits; and of the Puritans; their repression. Plots against the Queen's life; execution of Mary, Queen of Scots. The Spanish Armada (1588). Irish rebellions; execution of Essex. [During all this time James VI. was reigning in Scotland.]

**James I., 1603-1625.**—Hampton Court Conference; Episcopacy maintained; translation of the Bible. Gunpowder Plot (1605); penal laws against Catholics. Marriage of Princess Elizabeth to Frederick, elector palatine (1613); outbreak of Thirty Years' War (1618). Execution of Raleigh (1618). No Parliament (1614-1621). The Spanish Match. The Pilgrim Fathers at New Plymouth (1620).

**Charles I., 1625-1649.**—Quarrels with Parliament. French expedition to Rochelle. The Petition of Right (1628). No Parliament (1629-1640). Ship-money, and Hampden's opposition. Wentworth's "thorough" policy in Ireland. The Scottish National Covenant against Episcopacy (1638). The Long Parliament—execution of Strafford (1641); abolition of Star-chamber, etc.; civil war; rise of Cromwell; the king's execution.

**Parliament, 1649-1653.**—Conquest of Ireland; defeat of the Scots

at Dunbar ; at Worcester—all by Cromwell. Blake's victories by sea over the Dutch. The Rump Parliament dissolved.

**Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector, 1653-1658.**—Extension of British power abroad ; religious freedom at home ; toleration for Protestants over all Europe.

**Richard Cromwell, 1658-1660.**—Struggle between Parliament and army ; decided by Monk. Convention Parliament. Declaration from Breda. Restoration.

### INTRODUCTION

The period of eighty years from 1580 to 1660 is not only the greatest in the history of English literature, but one of the four or five greatest in the literary history of the world. It stands unmatched by the brilliant opening of the nineteenth century at home, and even the age of Pericles in the literary history of ancient Greece does not altogether outshine it. Its greatness is revealed in the quantity and quality of its productions, in the number of illustrious names which adorn it, and in the degree of excellence attained in every department of literature then cultivated. It is pre-eminent alike in prose and in verse. To it belong in the department of non-dramatic poetry the great names of Spenser and Milton ; in dramatic poetry those of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson ; in philosophy Bacon and Hobbes ; in theology Hooker and Taylor ; in history Lord Clarendon. Even its second-class men, such as Chapman and Marlowe, Webster and Beaumont and Fletcher, and Thomas Browne, would rank in other English periods with the foremost. The wealth and variety of its thought and feeling are equalled by the wealth and variety of its expression. A lofty ideality is its prevailing characteristic ; its prose is as imaginative as its verse. It has been called the Elizabethan age of literature, and with justice, for not only did it begin in the reign of Elizabeth,

but the impulses which then commenced to play upon literature continued to operate for half a century after her death.

It was a combination of causes which produced the marvellous outburst of literary genius in the reign of Elizabeth. Chief among them were the invention of printing, the revival of learning, the reformation of religion, the discovery of America—events of the preceding age the importance and effects of which were now more fully realized; the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the patronage of the court, and the establishment of a popular government in a united state.

Of foreign literary influences affecting the period, Latin was the most powerful; next come Italian and ancient Greek; Spanish influence was less felt than these; French still less; and German least of them all. Translations from these various languages continued to be made. Ovid, for example, was rendered into English by Golding, Churchyard, and Sandys; Virgil by Stanishurst and Ogilvy; Seneca by Newton and Studley; Tacitus by Savile. Ariosto was Englished by Harrington in 1591; Tasso by Carew, and later (in 1600) by Fairfax. Versions of Homer were given by Chapman (beginning 1598), and (from the French of Salel) by Arthur Hall; Hesiod also was translated by Chapman. Spanish plays were adapted or imitated; and the *Lusiad* of Camoens was rendered (1655) by Fanshawe. John Florio gave a version of Montaigne's Essays in 1603; Sylvester translated Du Bartas; and Urquhart began his version of Rabelais. Translations such as these not only furnished English writers with models for imitation, but inspired them with ideas and suggested themes. Greene, for example, dramatized *Orlando Furioso*; Peele took up the *Tale of Troy*; Lyly wrote *Gala-*



*tea* and *Midas* ; Shakespeare, besides handling the fable of *Venus and Adonis*, and the story of *Lucrece*, found excellent subjects for drama in *Coriolanus*, *Julius Cæsar*, etc. Ben Jonson composed *Sejanus* and *Catiline* ; and Marlowe, in addition to the love-story of *Hero and Leander*, came across a congenial theme in the German legend of Doctor Faustus.

Among the great and varied mass of translated works which marks the period, special notice should be taken of the Authorized Version of the Bible, which appeared in 1611 ; being universally and continuously read, it had a powerful effect in giving steadiness and uniformity to the English tongue.

It was in this period that English literature acquired European fame, and it is from this period that modern English literature dates. There is only one really great English name in the antecedent times, that of Chaucer. But the immediately preceding period, and especially the close of it, prepared the way for the Elizabethan age. The Elizabethan writers took up and developed the work which Surrey and Buckhurst had inaugurated, and extracted a new and nobler music from the sonnet and blank-verse. They continued the amourist poetry, and gave it a warmth and strength of expression hitherto unknown ; historical themes were more largely cultivated ; and the drama was suddenly brought by Marlowe and Shakespeare to a pitch of excellence higher than it was ever again to reach. Epic and lyrical poetry attained a correspondingly high level ; pastoralism was introduced ; nature was made a special subject of poetical observation ; and a new school of poetical allegory was founded.

Literary prose begins now. It passed under Lyly and his followers through a peculiar probationary phase

known as Euphuism—from which it soon happily emerged, to run wild in the style of Taylor and of Milton in unrestrained but unaffected freedom. Yet in the essays of Bacon and the treatises of Hobbes there is some anticipation of the condensed style of prose which came in with Dryden. Hooker, whose language is grave and stately, may be taken as the first writer of modern literary prose. In the later half of the period, controversial writings became common, and satire began its attacks on the Puritan party.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF THE PRINCIPAL AUTHORS

##### I. *Poets*.—SPENSER AND MILTON.

*Of less note*.—SIDNEY, DANIEL, DRAYTON, DONNE, DRUMMOND, WITHER, CAREW, WILLIAM BROWNE, QUARLES, HERBERT, HERRICK, SUCKLING, LOVELACE, CRASHAW.

##### II. *Dramatic Poets*.—SHAKESPEARE AND JONSON.

*Others*. — CHAPMAN, GREENE, MARLOWE, WEBSTER, FLETCHER, MASSINGER, BEAUMONT, SHIRLEY.

##### III. *Prose Writers*.—BACON AND TAYLOR.

*Others*.—RALEIGH, HOOKER, LYLY, HOBBS, WALTON, THOMAS BROWNE, FULLER, HYDE (LORD CLARENDON).

*Note*.—Ben Jonson was appointed Poet-Laureate in 1630. After him the next Laureate was Sir William Davenant, 1637. Samuel Daniel, though not formally appointed, may be regarded with some color as filling the office before Jonson.

#### POETS

The next great English poet after Chaucer, the people's poet of the day, and the poets' poet also, both then and ever since, **Edmund Spenser** (1552–1599), was born in London, of parents poor but connected with “a house of ancient fame.” He was educated first at Merchant Taylors', and afterwards at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, which he entered as a sizar at the age of seventeen, and where he remained for seven years, till his graduation as M.A. in 1576. He was an accomplished scholar, though, like Mil-

ton, he did not gain a fellowship. On leaving Cambridge he went to reside with friends for about two years in the north of England, where he fell in love with Rosalind, who did not respond to his passion, and where he wrote *The Shepherd's Calendar*, a set of twelve eclogues, one for each month of the year. He was twenty-six when he returned to London, and there, by the good offices of his college friend Gabriel Harvey, he made personal acquaintance with Lord Leicester and Lord Leicester's nephew Sidney. By them he was introduced at court, and favorably received by the queen, and through them he had access to the best political and literary society of the time. It was while residing with Sidney at Penshurst, early in 1580, that *The Shepherd's Calendar* was published, bringing him immediate and permanent recognition as the foremost poet of his day, and that he conceived the idea of his great work *The Faërie Queene*, stimulated thereto by the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto. It was probably the indifference of the Cecils to poetical ability that stood in the way of Spenser's advancement at court; at last he grew tired of his "long fruitless stay" in London, and accompanied Lord Grey to Ireland in 1580 as private secretary to the deputy. Grey did not long remain in Ireland, but Spenser stayed on, making the new country his home. He filled various civil offices, and was at last awarded a grant of over three thousand acres of the forfeited estate of the Desmonds at Kilcolman, in county Cork. His interest in the English colonization of Southern Ireland is shown in his masterly and even statesmanlike *View of the State of Ireland*, his only memorable prose work, which remained unpublished for thirty-four years after his death. But it was to poetry he devoted his first and fullest attention. Ten almost unchronicled but not idle years of his life had passed since his first coming to Ireland when Spenser reappeared in London in 1590 with the first three books of *The Faërie Queene*. Raleigh, "the shepherd of the ocean," had found the exiled poet sitting "amongst the coolly shade of the green alders by the Mulla's shore," and, after himself hear-

ing the witching strains of the most musical of poems, had brought the poet and his music to Elizabeth, that she too might be enchanted. Spenser himself, as Colin, has told all the circumstances of this memorable visit to London in Raleigh's company in the fine pastoral *Colin Clout's Come Home Again*. Elizabeth rewarded him with a pension of £50. His gracious reception at court, and the inspiring influence of London literary society, then at its best and busiest, incited Spenser to increased activity, and the remainder of his life in Ireland up to the tragedy which brought it to an abrupt close may, on the whole, be described as one of poetical peace and prosperity, agreeably diversified by his marriage (in 1594) and frequent visits to London. The succession of his principal works from the first appearance of *The Faërie Queene* in 1590 is as follows: A collection of minor poems, entitled *Complaints* (containing *The Ruins of Time*, *Tears of the Muses*, *Virgil's Gnat*, *Mother Hubbard's Tale*, *The Ruins of Rome*, *Muioptomos*, and three sets of *Visions*), and the *Daphnaida*, both published in 1591; *Colin Clout's Come Home Again*, *Astrophel*—an elegy on the death of Sir Philip Sidney—and the *Amoretti* or *Love Sonnets*, along with the *Epithalamion* or *Marriage Song*, in 1595; and in 1596, Books IV.–VI. of *The Faërie Queene*, and later in the same year the *Four Hymns* and the *Prothalamion*. In 1598 Spenser was nominated Sheriff of Cork. Only a few weeks thereafter began the Irish rebellion. The rebels plundered and set fire to his castle-home; one of his children was lost in the flames; he himself fled to England, and died in an inn at Westminster, destitute and broken-hearted.

*The Faërie Queene*, as we have it, consists of six books of twelve cantos each, and two cantos—not the first two—and a couple of stanzas of a seventh book; and the first book, commencing—after some prefatory verses in imitation of Virgil's *Æneid*—with the well-known line, “A gentle knight was pricking on the plain,” goes on at once to relate the legend of the Red Cross Knight. Thus, without explaining the plan and scope of his poem where such an ex-

planation is usually looked for, Spenser, to use his own words, "thrusteth into the midst" of his subject with some abruptness. It was his intention in the twelfth and last book to give the necessary explanation; but as the twelfth book has not been preserved, and probably was never written, the key to a proper knowledge of the work would have been wanting had it not been for Spenser's letter of elucidation to Raleigh. From this letter we learn that "the general end of all the book is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline." The method employed for this moral purpose is "an historical fiction," or allegory, with the history of Arthur before he was king for a basis. Arthur is to represent Magnanimity, the sum of all the virtues, in the guise of "a brave knight perfected in the twelve moral virtues;" but each of the virtues is also to be represented in action by a patron knight. Thus Holiness is represented by the Red Cross Knight, Temperance by Sir Guyon, Chastity by Britomartis, Friendship by Cambel and Triamond, Justice by Artegall, and Courtesy by Sir Calidore; and it was further intended to represent in a similar manner by six other knights the remaining six virtues of the Aristotelian canon — viz., Constancy, Truth, Prudence, Courage, Liberality, and Righteous Ambition. These twelve knights were in attendance at the court of the Fairy Queen, Gloriana, who was to be represented in the twelfth book as keeping her annual festival. On each of the twelve days of the festival, a knight on some occasion or other was supposed to have undertaken and ridden forth upon an adventure, each to have his virtue tested by encountering his opponent vice. Meanwhile Prince Arthur, who has had a dream of Gloriana, is supposed to be searching for the Fairy Queen, and comes across the various knights-errant at a critical time in their several adventures. When next the Fairy Queen holds her forest court they are all expected to return and relate their various experiences, and at last there is to be the marriage of Gloriana and Arthur.

The interest, to an ordinary reader of *The Faërie Queene*,

is in the story. It is one of ever-varying, often marvellous, adventure—a narrative of doughty knights and distressed damsels, grim giants and loathly dragons, fairies and hermits and dwarfs, haunted forests and enchanted castles. A deeper interest lies in the moral allegory of the tale, to which is even superadded an historical allegory; for Una represents not only Truth, but the Protestant Church; Duessa, not only Error, but Mary Queen of Scots; Britomartis, not only Chastity, but Queen Elizabeth. The Fairy Queen also represents Queen Elizabeth and at the same time Glory; Arthur stands for Magnanimity and also the Earl of Leicester; Sir Artegal is Justice and Lord Grey; Orgoglio is Antichrist and King Philip of Spain; and so on.

Two spirits pervade the whole body of Spenser's poetry: in *The Faërie Queene* it is Arthurianism; in the minor poems it is, for the most part, the spirit of a refined Pastoralism. The stanza of *The Faërie Queene* was Spenser's invention, and naturally bears his name. Next to blank-verse and the heroic couplet, it is the measure best adapted for a long narrative in English verse. Developed from rhyme royal and the sonnet, it consists of a set of nine iambic lines, of which the first eight are pentameter, and the ninth an Alexandrine or English hexameter; and the rhymes follow according to the formula—*ab ab bc bc c*. Spenser's diction is purposely archaic; it is garnished with Chaucerisms, false and true, the object being to give an antique flavor to the poem. Later-poets who have adopted the Spenserian measure have also, more or less, followed Spenser's example in the use of archaisms, Shenstone and Thomson copiously, Byron in *Childe Harold* more sparingly. The chief features of Spenser's verse are its ease, fluency, and fulness; it is always musical, flowing with a gliding movement that never jars, and that would become monotonous to the ear from its maintained sweetness, were it not for the rich succession of rare and beautiful imagery which simultaneously fills and entertains the imagination. No more musical poet than Spenser has ever used the English language, and none perhaps had so exquisite a perception of beauty.



"Enforst to seeke some covert nigh\* at hand,  
 A shadie grove not farr away they spide,  
 That promist ayde the tempest to withstand;  
 Whose loftie trees, yclad with sommers pride,  
 Did spred so broad, that heavens light did hide,  
 Not perceable with power of any starr:  
 And all within were pathes and alleies wide,  
 With footing worne, and leading inward farr,  
 Faire harbour that them seems, so in they entered ar.

"And foorth they passe, with pleasure forward led,  
 Joying to heare the birdes sweete harmony,  
 Which, therein shrouded from the tempest dred,  
 Seemd in their song to scorne the cruell sky.  
 Much can they praise the trees so straight and hy,  
 The sayling Pine; the Cedar proud and tall;  
 The vine-propp Elme; the Poplar never dry;  
 The builder Oake, sole king of forrests all;  
 The Aspine good for staves; the Cypresse funerall;

"The Laurell, meed of mightie Conquerours  
 And Poets sage; the Firre that weepeth still;  
 The Willow, worne of forlone Paramours;  
 The Eugh,<sup>1</sup> obedient to the benders will; <sup>1</sup> *Yew*  
 The Birch for shaftes; the Sallow for the mill;  
 The Mirrhe sweete-bleeding in the bitter wound;  
 The warlike Beech; the Ash for nothing ill;  
 The fruitfull Olive; and the Platane round;  
 The carver Holme; the Maple seeldom inward sound. . .

"A little lowly Hermitage it was,  
 Downe in a dale, hard by a forests side,  
 Far from resort of people that did pas  
 In travaill to and froe: a little wyde  
 There was an holy chappell edifyde,  
 Wherein the Hermite dewly wont to say  
 His holy thinges each morne and eventyde:  
 Thereby a christall streame did gently play,  
 Which from a sacred fountaine wellled forth alway.

"Arrived there, the litle house they fill,  
 Ne looke for entertainment where none was;  
 Rest is their feast, and all thinges at their will:  
 The noblest mind the best contentment has.

With faire discourse the evening so they pas;  
 For that olde man of pleasing words had store,  
 And well could file his tongue as smooth as glas:  
 He told of Saintes and Popes, and evermore  
 He strowd an Ave-Mary after and before."

—*The Faërie Queene*, book i. canto 1.

"And is there care in heaven? And is there love  
 In heavenly spirits to these creatures bace,  
 That may compassion of their evilles move?  
 There is: else much more wretched were the cace  
 Of men than beasts. But O! th' exceeding grace  
 Of highest God that loves his creatures so,  
 And all his workes with mercy doth embrace,  
 That blessed Angels he sends to and fro,  
 To serve to wicked man, to serve his wicked foe.

"How oft do they their silver bowers leave,  
 To come to succour us that succour want!  
 How oft do they with golden pinions cleave  
 The flitting skyes, like flying Pursuivant,  
 Against fowle feendes to ayd us militant!  
 They for us fight, they watch and dewly ward,  
 And their bright Squadrons round about us plant;  
 And all for love, and nothing for reward.  
 O! why should heavenly God to men have such regard?"  
 —Book ii. canto 8.

"Then came the Autumne all in yellow clad,  
 As though he joyed in his plentious store,  
 Laden with fruits that made him laugh, full glad  
 That he had banisht hunger, which to-fore  
 Had by the belly oft him pinchd sore:  
 Upon his head a wreath, that was enrold  
 With ears of corne of every sort, he bore;  
 And in his hand a sickle he did holde,  
 To reape the ripened fruits the which the earth  
 had yold."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>yielded

—Book vii. canto 7.

Great in prose and great in verse, much greater than any other English poet whatever, Shakespeare only excepted, and the greatest epic poet of modern times, **John Milton** (1608-1674) was born in his father's house, at the sign of the

Spread Eagle, in Bread Street, Cheapside, London. He was a small boy of eight at the time of Shakespeare's death, and it is possible that Shakespeare coming from or going to the Mermaid Club, which was in the neighborhood of Bread Street, may have seen the boy at play near his father's door. His father was a scrivener in good circumstances, and with distinctly religious leanings to the side of Puritanism. His mother's name was Sarah Bradshaw. He was the third of a family of six children, and was of such unusual promise that his father from the first spared no expense or trouble for the development of his genius. He was carefully educated both at school and at home, his evening studies being superintended by a tutor named Thomas Young, a native of Perthshire, and a graduate of St. Andrews. It was Young, with whom as long as he lived Milton maintained very intimate friendly relations, who first gave him a taste for poetry and encouraged him to poetical exercises. His London school was St. Paul's, where he remained till he was sixteen. But the school-boy was a student from his twelfth year, and was allowed from that tender age to sit up at his books till midnight, after the household had retired to rest. It was probably this early application to learning which overtasked his sight, and caused the blindness which overtook him in middle age. From St. Paul's young Milton went to Christ's College, Cambridge, possessed at his entrance of as much classical knowledge as most young men carry with them at their departure from the university, when their education is thought to be complete.

Milton was an ardent student, and remained at Cambridge for seven years, till he graduated M.A. in 1632. As an undergraduate he had been nicknamed by his fellow-students, from his physical beauty and the purity of his moral conduct, "The Lady of Christ's"; but he was an adept in all manly exercises, a powerful debater, and an accomplished scholar. He was too self-assertive, and too unsympathetic with those whose tastes differed from his own, to be at any time of his life an amiable person, but nobody could have known John Milton without respecting and admiring him.

His views of the responsibility of life, and especially of his own, were from youth of the most pronounced character. It was not so much a responsibility to his fellow-men; the sense of being under the eye of the great Taskmaster kept his motives and his behavior pure. Ambitious he was to excel, but his ambition was the aspiration of a noble mind. It was directed by the sacred belief that only from a noble mind and a pure life could come any truly great work or achievement. This is the key to Milton's personal character and history. He was a Puritan, but he belonged to the early Puritans, who were neither sour-faced nor fanatical, who believed in the beauty of art and the joys of earth as affording solace and aid to the higher life.

Milton left Cambridge without choosing a profession, and went to live at Horton in Bucks, where his father had settled in ease and leisure after withdrawing from business in London. Here, within ready access of London (the distance is only seventeen miles), in the midst of rich pastoral and sylvan scenery, Milton had a long delightful holiday of five years, spent for the most part in intercourse with nature and poetry, and in the prosecution of such contrasted studies as music and mathematics. Here he seems to have abandoned all thought of entering either the Church or the law—professions which at successive times had drawn his attention—and to have begun to prepare himself with exclusive devotion for the calling of a poet. It was at Horton that he wrote the best of his minor poems—*L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* in 1632, *The Masque of Comus* in 1634, and *Lycidas* in 1637. But he had begun versifying at school; and at college had produced poems of commanding merit, and still more convincing promise, in the *Ode on the Nativity*—the first poem of his manhood, written at twenty-one—and the *Sonnet on being arrived at the Age of Twenty-three*. Before he was thirty Milton had already done enough to rank him with Spenser and Wordsworth. The Horton period of Milton's life came to an end shortly after, and partly because of, the death of his mother in 1637.

In 1638 he was in Italy. He saw and made many friends

in Florence, Naples, and Rome; and returned to England, without visiting Greece, after an absence of more than a year, recalled by a sense of duty—"inasmuch as I thought it base to be travelling at my ease for amusement while my fellow-countrymen at home were fighting for liberty." The rumor of those civil disturbances, which afterwards kindled into war, had reached his ears, and he hurried home to watch the progress of events, and aid the cause of purity in the Church and freedom in the State.

We come now to that period of Milton's life during which he was a householder in London. It may be divided into three parts. The first part extends over ten years, from 1639 to 1649. During this time he kept a school, which was attended by (among other boys of good family) his nephews the Phillippes, sons of his sister Anne; married a young wife of seventeen, Mary Powell, daughter of an Oxfordshire squire, a Royalist, who owed him money; and brought his father, and afterwards his father-in-law and the Powells, to share his home. Meanwhile his pen was busy—chiefly with prose polemics against Prelacy. In this controversy he took part with the Smectymnuans against Bishop Hall. Smectymnuus was originally a party of five Puritans, bent on reforming the English Church by bringing it nearer to the Presbyterian model. The word Smectymnuus was made from the initials of their names, and it is interesting to note that the middle letters of the word stand for Thomas Young, Milton's early tutor. It was in this part of his London citizenship also that Milton wrote his four tracts on divorce. The cause of this remarkable series of pamphlets was a personal one. Mary Powell, after staying with him a month, deserted him for two years, and, in his fury, Milton tried to force on public attention the necessity for a reform of the marriage laws. His other prose work of the ten years before us consisted of the *Areopagitica*, a sublimely eloquent appeal to Parliament for the free expression of ideas, usually regarded as Milton's masterpiece in prose; and a letter to Samuel Hartlib on the superiority of a classical education—both produced in 1644. All these ten years

poetry was to Milton rather a dream than an enjoyment, yet he found time to write (in Latin, unfortunately) a finer elegy than even *Lycidas*, the *Epitaphium Damonis*, or lament for the death of his dearest friend, Carl Diodati; time also to write, as occasion served, eight sonnets; and time to issue an edition (in 1645) of his early poems.

The second part of Milton's life as a householder in London also stretches over ten years, from 1649 to 1659. During this time he held the office of Foreign or Latin Secretary to the Commonwealth, with a salary nearly equal to £1000 of our money. He had parted company with the Presbyterians for both personal and public reasons, and had attached himself to the Independents, or Cromwellian party. Immediately on the execution of Charles he commenced the series of his political prose pamphlets on regicide by issuing *The Tenure of Kings*, in which he boldly characterized the terrible action as one of highest justice. It was for this that he was appointed to office. Then followed in succession his *Eikonoklastes*, a rancorous assault on the dead king; his *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano*, written in Latin, against the hired attack of the great French scholar Salmasius; and the *Defensio Secunda*—all learned and eloquent compositions, but stained with coarse invective and foul abuse, incredible to those who have not read them. In this period Milton became totally blind (1652), but without disfigurement; his wife died (1653), leaving behind her the three daughters who afterwards proved unfilial; Andrew Marvell was appointed his assistant in the Foreign Office; and Milton married (1656) his second wife, Catharine Woodcock, whose death, scarcely more than a year afterwards, he sincerely lamented. He also continued from time to time to write sonnets; and the eight which were the product of these ten years contain his best work of this kind. They include his noble encouragement of Cromwell, and of Sir Henry Vane; and his cry for vengeance on the triple tyrant for the massacre in Piedmont: these were the trumpet-notes to which Wordsworth's well-known sonnet on the Sonnet pointedly refers.



The third period of Milton's life as a householder in London extends over fourteen years, from 1660 to 1674. He had now fallen on evil tongues and evil days. His life was in danger, and he went into hiding till the Act of Oblivion was passed. His life was now one of neglect, obscurity, and comparative poverty. Yet he had friends to cheer his loneliness. His third wife was Elizabeth Minshull, whom he married in 1664; Thomas Ellwood, a young scholar, used to read to him; and he had a good physician in Dr. Paget. But his chief consolation was in the composition of the sublime epics, *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, and the sacred drama of *Samson Agonistes*. The *Paradise Lost* was finished in 1665, and published in 1667; *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* appeared together in 1671. Ten pounds was all that Milton himself received for his great poem; and his widow parted with the copyright for an additional eight. Milton also wrote during his blindness a *History of Britain*, published in 1670. Milton died of gout on Sunday, November 8, 1674.

Milton's great merits of style are the noble and varied harmony of his numbers, and the astonishing force and magnificence of his imagery. His periods are long and involved, yet always in his verse built up with the most perfect symmetry. In his prose, which chiefly differs from his verse in the absence of metrical rhythm, this symmetry is wanting; the construction is loose and careless, and the sentence often runs to several hundreds of words. He imported many classical words and idioms, and illustrates largely with classical mythology and literature. Indeed, he is the most learned of poets.

“ No war, or battle's sound,  
Was heard the world around;  
The idle spear and shield were high uphung;  
The hookéd chariot stood,  
Unstained with hostile blood;  
The trumpet spake not to the arméd throng;  
And kings sat still with awful eye,  
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by. . . .

The Oracles are dumb;  
 No voice or hideous hum  
 Runs through the archéd roof in words deceiving.  
 Apollo from his shrine  
 Can no more divine,  
 With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.  
 No nightly trance, or breathéd spell,  
 Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

“The lonely mountains o’er,  
 And the resounding shore,  
 A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;  
 From haunted spring, and dale  
 Edged with poplar pale,  
 The parting Genius is with sighing sent;  
 With flower-inwoven tresses torn  
 The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.”  
 —*Hymn on the Nativity.*

“Two such I saw, what time the laboured ox  
 In his loose traces from the furrow came,  
 And the swinked hedger at his supper sat.  
 I saw them under a green mantling vine,  
 That crawls along the side of yon small hill,  
 Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;  
 Their port was more than human, as they stood.  
 I took it for a faery vision  
 Of some gay creatures of the element,  
 That in the colours of the rainbow live,  
 And play i’ the plighted clouds. I was awe-strook,  
 And, as I passed, I worshipped. If those you seek,  
 It were a journey like the path to Heaven  
 To help you find them.”

—*Comus.*

“When I consider how my light is spent  
 Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,  
 And that one talent which is death to hide  
 Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent  
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
 My true account, lest He returning chide,  
 ‘Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?’  
 I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent  
 That murmur, soon replies, ‘God doth not need  
 Either man’s work or His own gifts. Who best

Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best. His state  
Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,  
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;  
They also serve who only stand and wait.'"

—*On his Blindness.*

"Lawrence, of virtuous father virtuous son,  
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,  
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire  
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won  
From the hard season gaining? Time will run  
On smother, till Favonius reinspire  
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire  
The lily and rose, that neither sowed nor spun.  
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,  
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise  
To hear the lute well touched, or artful voice  
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?  
He who of those delights can judge, and spare  
To interpose them oft, is not unwise."

—*To Mr. Lawrence.*

"Straight he commands that, at the warlike sound  
Of trumpets loud and clarions, be upreared  
His mighty standard. That proud honour claimed  
Azazel as his right, a cherub tall:  
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled  
The imperial ensign; which, full high advanced,  
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,  
With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,  
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while  
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:  
At which the universal host upsent  
A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond  
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.  
All in a moment through the gloom were seen  
Ten thousand banners rise into the air,  
With orient colours waving: with them rose  
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms  
Appeared, and serried shields in thick array  
Of depth immeasurable."

—*Paradise Lost*, book i.

"Sweet is the breath of Morn, her rising sweet,  
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,  
When first on this delightful land he spreads

His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,  
 Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertile Earth  
 After soft showers; and sweet the coming-on  
 Of grateful Evening mild; then silent Night,  
 With this her solemn bird; and this fair Moon,  
 And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train:  
 But neither breath of Morn, when she ascends  
 With charm of earliest birds; nor rising Sun  
 On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,  
 Glistening with dew; nor fragrance after showers,  
 Nor grateful Evening mild; nor silent Night,  
 With this her solemn bird; nor walk by moon,  
 Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet."

—*Paradise Lost*, book iv.

"Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount,  
 Westward, much nearer by southwest; behold  
 Where on the Ægean shore a city stands,  
 Built nobly, pure the air and light the soil—  
 Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts  
 And eloquence, native to famous wits  
 Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,  
 City or suburban, studious walks and shades.  
 See there the olive-grove of Academe,  
 Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird;  
 Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;  
 There, flowery hill, Hymettus, with the sound  
 Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites  
 To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls  
 His whispering stream."

—*Paradise Regained*, book iv.

#### OTHER POETS

Sir Philip Sidney (1554–1586), whose character would have adorned the most chivalrous of Arthur's knights, was not only a man of action, but a patron of literature, and the friend of poets such as Spenser, and himself a poet of no mean rank in both prose and verse. He was born at Penshurst in Kent, a scion of one of the noblest families of England; was educated at Christchurch College, Oxford; and spent three years of his youth in Continental travel. In his twenty-first year he was one of the most accomplished cavaliers of his age, and was even regarded by Queen Elizabeth as the jewel of her time. An impetuosity of temper was perhaps the only blemish of his knightly character. In him the

poet and the soldier were strangely blended. Now he is penning amourist sonnets of tender devotion to Stella, now he is contemplating an expedition with Sir Francis Drake to the Spanish main; at one time he is dreaming of an ideal Arcadia among the bowers of Wilton, at another charging the Spaniards on the plains of Zutphen. It was at Zutphen he received his fatal wound, an event forever associated with the well-known anecdote of the cup of water and the dying soldier. Sidney's poetry shows Italian influence in both the form and the theme; it is best exemplified in his series of love sonnets, *Astrophel and Stella*, poetical names for himself and Penelope Devereux, daughter of the Earl of Essex. One of these, beginning "With how sad steps, O moon!" has been described as "the first perfectly charming sonnet in the English language." His prose consists of a pastoral romance which he wrote for the entertainment of his sister, and which he called in her honor *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, and a spirited defence of the poetical art, *The Apology for Poetry*, written in reply to the attack of Stephen Gosson, a Puritan minister. Both works, but especially the former, are in the style of the *Euphuës* of Lyly, *The Apology* is the first piece of literary criticism we have; in the drama Sidney insists on the preservation of the Three Unities, and the exclusion of comic scenes from tragedy. Fortunately the school of Shakespeare followed its own natural instincts.

"With how sad steps, O moon! thou climb'st the skies,  
How silently, and with how wan a face!  
What may it be, that even in heavenly place  
That busy Archer his sharp arrows tries?  
Sure, if that long with love-acquainted eyes  
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case;  
I read it in thy looks, thy languished grace  
To me that feel the like thy state describes.  
Then, even of fellowship, O moon, tell me,  
Is constant love deemed there but want of wit?  
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?  
Do they above love to be loved, and yet  
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?  
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness?"

**Samuel Daniel** (1562-1619) was the son of a music-master near Taunton in Somersetshire, was educated at Oxford, and became tutor to Lady Anne Clifford, daughter of the Earl of Cumberland. He found powerful friends in the Earls of Pembroke and Southampton, and Sir Philip Sidney; and in the reign of James I. filled various minor appointments at court. For the most part, how-

ever, his London life was that of the literary recluse. He spent his last years on a small estate of his own in his native county. He was a man, like Wordsworth, of a contemplative turn of mind and correct tastes, and his amiable disposition made him very much esteemed by his contemporaries. He wrote a series of amatory sonnets, inscribed to Delia, and a great number of historical poems, of which the best is *The Complaint of Rosamond*, and the longest a *History of the Civil Wars of York and Lancaster*. His style is strangely modern, and is remarkable for its purity, correctness, and fluency. He has been called "the well-languaged Daniel." Sweetness is the chief characteristic of his poetry; but he is wanting in strength, and has no passion even in his Delia sonnets. He also wrote *Cleopatra*, a tragedy in the classical style, and some pastoral dramas. A prose essay of his, a *Defence of Rhyme*, is memorable for having checked the attempted introduction of classical metres into English versification, which Gabriel Harvey was so anxious for Spenser to adopt.

"He that of such a height hath built his mind,  
 And reared the dwelling of his thoughts so strong,  
 As neither hope nor fear can shake the frame  
 Of his resolvéd powers; nor all the wind  
 Of vanity or malice pierce to wrong  
 His settled peace, or to disturb the same:  
 What a fair seat hath he, from whence he may  
 The boundless wastes and wilds of man survey!"  
 —*Epistle to the Countess of Cumberland.*

"Ah, I remember well—and how can I  
 But evermore remember well?—when first  
 Our flame began, when scarce we knew what was  
 The flame we felt; when as we sat and sighed  
 And looked upon each other, and conceived  
 Not what we ailed, yet something we did ail,  
 And yet were well, and yet we were not well,  
 And what was our disease we could not tell."  
 —*Early Love.*

A more vigorous, and even more voluminous, historical poet than Daniel was his contemporary, **Michael Drayton** (1563–1631). Like Shakespeare, whom he knew, Drayton was from Warwickshire, and well acquainted with the Bohemianism of literary London, yet never at home in it; we are told that he never learned to "swagger in a tavern." Under various patronage he began to write early, and wrote with steady industry all through his life.



Besides a collection of love-sonnets, inscribed in the fashion of the times to an imaginary mistress, Idea, Drayton wrote *The Barons' Wars*, and *England's Heroical Epistles*. The last was published in 1598. His great work, great more especially in size, *Polyolbion*, was the achievement of his later life. It began to appear in 1612, and was completed in 1622. It is in rhymed English hexameters, and consists of many thousands of lines, divided into thirty songs or cantos—a canto for each county. The scope of this huge poem is vast enough to take in whatever may be imagined to make for the glory of England. It is a storehouse of historical, biographical, topographical, and antiquarian information; a poetical monument of patriotic industry. The undoubted patriotic fire of Drayton shows to more advantage in his famous ballad of Agincourt—the precursor of the scarcely more admirable war-odes of Campbell. Much of the easy mastery of verse, the masculine frankness of expression, which afterwards characterized Dryden, will be found in Drayton.

“Fair stood the wind for France,  
 When we our sails advance,  
 Nor now to prove our chance  
     Longer will tarry;  
 But putting to the main,  
 At Caux, the mouth of Seine,  
 With all his martial train,  
     Landed King Harry. . . .

“The Duke of York so dread  
 The eager vaward led;  
 With the main Henry sped,  
     Amongst his henchmen;  
 Excester had the rear,  
 A braver man not there:  
 O Lord, how hot they were  
     On the false Frenchmen!

“They now to fight are gone,  
 Armour on armour shone,  
 Drum now to drum did groan,  
     To hear was wonder;  
 That with the cries they make  
 The very earth did shake,  
 Trumpet to trumpet spake,  
     Thunder to thunder,” etc.  
     —*The Battle of Agincourt.*

"In this our spacious isle, I think there is not one  
 But he hath heard some talk of him and Little John;  
 And to the end of time, the tales shall ne'er be done  
 Of Scarlock, George-a-Green, and Much the miller's son,  
 Of Tuck the merry friar, which many a sermon made  
 In praise of Robin Hood, his outlaws, and their trade.  
 An hundred valiant men had this brave Robin Hood,  
 Still ready at his call, that bowmen were right good, . . .  
 And of these archers brave, there was not any one,  
 But he could kill a deer his swiftest speed upon,  
 Which they did boil and roast, in many a mighty wood  
 Sharp hunger the fine sauce to their more kingly food.  
 Then taking him to rest, his merry men and he  
 Slept many a summer's night under the greenwood-tree.  
 From wealthy abbots' chests and churls' abundant store,  
 What oftentimes he took he shared amongst the poor."  
 —*Polyolbion* (Robin Hood).

One of the most admired and perhaps influential poets of the period was **John Donne** (1573–1631), praised for his satirical wit. Carew described him as "a king who ruled as he thought fit the universal monarchy of wit," and Dryden declared him to be "the greatest wit of the nation." He probably inherited his wit from his mother, who was related to Sir Thomas More. When middle-aged, Donne became a clergyman, was extremely popular as a preacher, and rose to be Dean of St. Paul's. His satires are rough but vigorous, both in versification and sentiment; they contain a great many original and truly poetical ideas, often felicitously expressed, but his imagination, or rather fancy, carries him frequently beyond the limits of good taste and even propriety; and his passion for conceits, far-fetched similes, and recondite phrases makes his meaning often obscure. His rugged metre, contorted and condensed expression, and ingenious allusion seem to anticipate the style of Browning.

His name suggests that of **Joseph Hall** (1574–1656), a satirist of more smoothness but less force, whose *Vergidemiaram* belongs to the sixteenth century. Hall rose to be Bishop of Norwich, and laid aside satire for Church polemics. Young Milton and the Smectymnuans were his opponents.

**John Marston** (1575 ?–1634), better known as a dramatist, also wrote satire, virulent and crudely expressed, but laid it aside on entering the Church.

The brothers **Giles** and **Phineas Fletcher**, both born—Giles, the elder—some time between 1580 and 1590, were both clergymen, and wrote allegorical poetry with an inspiration derived entirely

from Spenser. *Christ's Victory and Triumph*, by Giles, and *The Purple Island* (or *Isle of Man*) of Phineas, had the honor to be studied and borrowed from by Milton, especially in his early poems. They are the link between Spenser and Milton.

Another Spenserian, also serviceable to the opening genius of Milton, was William Browne (1590-1645), whose *Britannia's Pastorals* began to appear in 1613. His other verse, *The Shepherd's Pipe*, a series of seven eclogues, like the *Pastorals*, is redolent of the country and rural leisure; at the same time it shows a gift of artistic description which, coupled with his genuine love of nature, made him a favorite of Keats, who in many points curiously recalls and resembles him.

William Drummond of Hawthornden (1585-1649), though a Scotsman, is remarkable as being, next after Shakespeare, the best writer of sonnets of the Elizabethan age. He was educated at Edinburgh and in France, and divided his time after his twenty-fifth year between residing at his lovely ancestral seat in the romantic valley of the Esk and travelling on the Continent in search of peace of mind, or at least diversion from private sorrow. He was of an extremely sensitive and refined nature, and a pensive and even melancholy cast of mind—qualities which are reflected in his best verse. Besides sonnets, he wrote *Flowers of Sion*, a collection of sacred pieces; *Forth Feasting*, a poem in honor of King James's visit to Scotland; and an essay in prose entitled *The Cypress Grove*, which attempts to reconcile man to his mortality. The most noteworthy literary incident in the outward life of Drummond was the visit which Ben Jonson paid him in the spring of 1619. The execution of Charles I. is said to have hastened his death.

“Stay, passenger, see where enclosed lies  
 The paragon of Princes, fairest frame  
 Time, nature, place, could show to mortal eyes,  
 In worth, wit, virtue and miracle of fame:  
 At least that part the earth of him could claim  
 This marble holds—hard like the Destinies—  
 For as to his brave spirit, and glorious name,  
 The one the world, the other fills the skies.  
 Th’ immortal amaranthus, princely rose,  
 Sad violet, and that sweet flower that bears  
 In sanguine spots the tenor of our woes,  
 Spread on this stone, and wash it with your tears;  
 Then go and tell from Gades unto Ind  
 You saw where Earth’s perfections were confined.”  
 —*Epitaph on Prince Henry.*

**George Wither** (1588-1667), a native of Hampshire, and educated at Oxford, began his career with a volume of satirical verse—*Abuses Whipt and Stript*—for which he was thrown into prison. There he continued to poetize, and produced probably his finest work, *The Shepherd's Hunting*. When the Civil War was inevitable, he sold his patrimony to raise a troop for the Parliament. In the course of the war he was captured by the Royalists, and was in danger of execution, when a brother poet, Denham, jocularly interfered to save him. "So long as he lives," said Denham, "I am not the worst poet in England!" In the despoliation of Royalist estates, Wither, now a major-general of Cromwell's, managed to repay himself for all his trouble; but being stripped of his gains at the Restoration, he raised an outcry which was found to be libellous, and he was again committed to jail. Here again he found consolation in writing verses.

Wither's poetical work is remarkable for its inequality. At its best it is singularly spontaneous and charming, but a good deal of it is doggerel. Like William Browne, he had a genuine love of nature, and a rare art of faithful description. But he had also the true lyrical gift, as testified by the songs with which *The Shepherd's Hunting* and *The Mistress of Philarete* are interspersed, and by his *Hymns and Songs of the Church*.

" Shall I, wasting in despair,  
 Die because a woman's fair?  
 Or make pale my cheeks with care,  
 'Cause another's rosy are?  
 Be she fairer than the day,  
 Or the flow'ry meads in May;  
 If she be not so to me,  
 What care I how fair she be?"  
—Song.

"For pleasant was that Pool; and near it, then,  
 Was neither rotten marsh nor boggy fen.  
 It was not overgrown with boisterous sedge,  
 Nor grew there rudely, then, along the edge  
 A bending willow, nor a prickly bush,  
 Nor broad-leaved flag, nor reed, nor knotty rush:  
 But here, well ordered, was a grove with bowers;  
 There, grassy plots, set round about with flowers.  
 Here, you might, through the water, see the land  
 Appear, strewed o'er with white or yellow sand.  
 Yon, deeper was it; and the wind, by whiffs,  
 Would make it rise, and wash the little cliffs;

On which, oft pluming, sate, unfrighted then,  
 The gagling wild goose, and the snow-white swan,  
 With all those flocks of fowl, which, to this day,  
 Upon those quiet waters breed and play."

—*The Mistress of Philarete* (Alresford Pool).

Among the lyrical poets of the period a high place must be allowed to **Thomas Carew** (1589-1639). He was of a Gloucestershire branch of the famous Carews of Devonshire, was educated at Oxford, travelled abroad, and ultimately became a courtier with the office of cup-bearer to King Charles. He was numbered of the tribe of Ben, and lived the loose gay life of which his lyrics are the melodious expression, till, according to his friend Hyde, the future historian, reflection brought repentance, and he became, in the practice of his later life, a sincere Christian. Carew has been unjustly condemned by Hazlitt as "an elegant Court trifler" in poetry. But it must be granted that he was a master of lyrical form, and that he had a rare sense of delicacy, which he combined too seldom with a manly glow and vigor of passion. He just misses being the equal of Herrick. Carew wrote little, but most of it is of exquisite quality. The song beginning "Ask me no more" is a fair specimen of his less ardent love poems; and he wrote a noble elegy on the death of Donne.

"Ask me no more where Jove bestows,  
 When June is past, the fading rose;  
 For in your beauties, orient deep,  
 These flowers, as in their causes, sleep.

"Ask me no more whither do stray  
 The golden atoms of the day;  
 For in pure love heaven did prepare  
 Those powders to enrich your hair.

"Ask me no more whither doth haste  
 The nightingale when May is past;  
 For in your sweet dividing throat  
 She winters, and keeps warm her note.

"Ask me no more if east or west  
 The Phoenix builds her spicy nest;  
 For unto you at last she flies,  
 And in your fragrant bosom dies!"

*The Divine Emblems* of **Francis Quarles** (1592-1644), first published the year after his death, have long been popular in the

English rural districts, and are remarkable as conveying the somewhat puritanical sentiments in religion and morality of a Royalist poet. Quarles wrote far too much to write much well; his verse alone—for he wrote prose besides—runs to very many thousands of lines. His strain of commonplace moralizing, however, took the fancy of the common people, and he has been as much admired as Young, if not more, and for the same reason. Quarles belonged to Essex, was educated at Cambridge, held a court appointment, and the office of chronologer to the city of London. He suffered much persecution latterly at the hands of the Roundheads.

“Holy” **George Herbert** (1593–1633) has been as long and as widely popular as Quarles, and with a slightly better claim to popularity. His reputation rests on *The Temple*, the fanciful title of a collection of religious and moral pieces, of which the hymn on Virtue is a perfect specimen. Herbert was born in Montgomery Castle, the fifth son of a family of aristocratic rank and connections, and the brother of Lord Herbert of Cherbury. He was educated at Cambridge, was made a Fellow of Trinity, and held the post of Public Orator for eight years. He had excellent hopes of court preferment and political office under James I., but suddenly turned his attention from secular to sacred matters, became a clergyman, married a wife, and settled to the humble duties of a country parson at Bemerton, near Salisbury. He died of consumption in his fortieth year. His biography has been written with a charming simplicity by Izaak Walton.

English lyrical literature holds no more cheerful song-bird than **Robert Herrick** (1594–1634). His song is spontaneous and free. It expresses with a pagan boldness and sincerity of note the varied delights of life, and the joy of living; and if there is also a subtle strain of sadness at the transitoriness of life, it comes only to relieve the joy and to heighten it. The real Herrick, who is pagan, is in the *Hesperides*; in the *Noble Numbers* it is the Reverend Robert Herrick, the Christian clergyman, who seeks to adapt his song to the piety of his profession. His hearty relish of this life is more apparent, and was presumably more sincere, than his belief in another, though he has expressed that belief with singular force in *The Litany*, the best and best known of his pious pieces. The contrast between his two volumes is increased when one remembers that they came out together in the year 1634. The *Hesperides* volume consists of hundreds of short poems—some of his epigrams, the most sensual part of his verse, extending to only a couple of lines—on such subjects as flowers, fruits, wine, childhood and youth, love, female beauty, rustic sports, and festivals, and the picturesque superstitions of folk-lore. It includes



such haunting lyrics as *The Apron of Flowers*, *Water Nymphs at a Fountain*, *A Nuptial Song to Clipseby Crew*, *The Mad Maid's Song*, and *To the Willow-Tree*, as well as the more familiarly known pieces, *To Daffodils* and *To Blossoms*, *To Julia*, *Grace for a Child*, *Gather the Rose-buds*, the exquisite song *To Anthea*, and *Corinna Maying*. Of the outward life of Herrick not much is known. He was born in London not later than 1594, and possibly before that; was educated at Cambridge; was, like Carew, of the tribe of Ben, whose tavern associate he was; became, when about forty, a clergyman, and was appointed to a charge at Dean Prior in Devonshire, where he was sufficiently out of place till he and his "salvages," his rustic parishioners, better understood each other; lost his living during the Civil War; was restored to it again in 1660, and survived the Restoration fourteen years.

"Good morrow to the day so fair!  
 Good morrow, sir, to you!  
 Good morrow to mine own torn hair  
 Bedabbled with the dew!  
 Good morrow to this primrose too!  
 Good morrow to each maid  
 That will with flowers the tomb bestrew  
 Wherein my love is laid!  
 Ah! woe is me! woe—woe is me!  
 Alack and well-a-day!  
 For pity, sir, find out that bee  
 Which bore my love away! . . .  
 Pray, hurt him not! though he be dead,  
 He knows well who do love him,  
 And who with green-turfs rear his head  
 And who do rudely move him!  
 He's soft and tender, pray take heed,  
 With bands of cowslips bind him,  
 And bring him home!—But 'tis decreed  
 That I shall never find him!"

—*The Mad Maid's Song.*

"Reach, with your whiter hands, to me  
 Some crystal of the spring,  
 And I about the cup shall see  
 Fresh lilies flourishing.  
 Or else, sweet nymphs, do you but this—  
 To the glass your lips incline,  
 And I shall see by that one kiss  
 The water turned to wine!"  
 —*To the Water-Nymphs Drinking at the Fountain.*

"Gather the rose-buds while you may,  
 Old Time is still a-flying,  
 And this same flower that smiles to-day,  
 To-morrow will be dying.  
 The glorious lamp of heaven, the Sun,  
 The higher he's a-getting,  
 The sooner will his race be run,  
 And nearer he's to setting.  
 That age is best which is the first,  
 When youth and blood are warmer ;  
 But, being spent, the worse, and worst  
 Time shall succeed the former.  
 Then be not coy, but use your time,  
 And while ye may, go marry;  
 For, having lost but once your prime,  
 You may forever tarry."  
 —*To the Virgins, to make much of their Time.*

**Sir John Suckling** (1608-1642) was an amateur writer, as his leisure or his fancy inclined him, of exquisite if too frequently immoral songs. He held the opinion that a gentleman should not take too much trouble with his verses ; but the opinion will not excuse the wretched doggerel which he sometimes suffered himself to write. He wrote on love, and gloried in inconstancy—after being puzzled to explain it :

"And yet the face continues good,  
 And I have still desires,  
 Am still the selfsame flesh and blood,  
 As apt to melt and suffer from those fires :  
 Oh ! some kind power, unriddle where it lies,  
 Whether my heart be faulty, or her eyes !"

In this aspect of his songs he offers a contrast to **Richard Lovelace** (1618-1650), whose two lyrics—*To Althea from Prison*, and *To Lucrezia on Going to the Wars*—represent their author as the devotedly constant and honorable lover :

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,  
 Loved I not honour more."

Suckling's best known and most quotable poems are the two lyrics, *Out upon it, I have lov'd three whole days together*, and *Why so pale and wan, fond lover ?* and the *Ballad on a Wedding*. The life of Suckling was full of adventure and change. He was the son of a Secretary of State, educated at Cambridge, and inherited, while

still under age, an immense fortune. He travelled, and saw service as a soldier on the Continent; he joined the Cavaliers on the outbreak of civil war in England, and, despite his losses by gambling at cards and bowls, equipped at his own expense a body of a hundred horse, which looked magnificently martial, but fled at sight of the Scots. He afterwards retired to France, where he committed suicide. Lovelace had similiar fortune; he too became a Cavalier, wasted his patrimony in the cause, and, falling into utter destitution, died in rags in a London slum. With these two Cavalier poets may be associated another whose heroic life is writ large in history—**James Grahame**, “the great” Marquis of Montrose, memorable here for this song beginning “My dear and only love, I pray.”

“Her feet beneath her petticoat,  
Like little mice, stole in and out,  
As if they feared the light:  
But oh! she dances such a way!  
No sun upon an Easter-day  
Is half so fair a sight. . . .

“Her cheeks so rare a white was on,  
No daisy makes comparison;  
Who sees them is undone;  
For streaks of red were mingled there,  
Such as are on a Cath’rine pear,  
The side that’s next the sun.

“Her lips were red; and one was thin,  
Compared to that was next her chin,  
Some bee had stung it newly;  
But, Dick, her eyes so guard her face,  
I durst no more upon them gaze  
Than on the sun in July.”

—*A Ballad upon a Wedding* (by Suckling).

“Out upon it, I have loved  
Three whole days together;  
And am like to love three more,  
If it prove fair weather.  
Time shall moult away his wings,  
Ere he shall discover  
In the whole wide world again  
Such a constant lover.  
But the spite on’t is, no praise  
Is due at all to me;

Love with me had made no stays,  
 Had it any been but she.  
 Had it any been but she,  
 And that very face,  
 There had been at least ere this  
 A dozen in her place."  
 —*Constancy* (by Suckling).

"Stone walls do not a prison make,  
 Nor iron bars a cage;  
 Minds, innocent and quiet, take  
 That for a hermitage:  
 If I have freedom in my love,  
 And in my soul am free,  
 Angels alone, that soar above,  
 Enjoy such liberty."  
 —*To Althea* (by Lovelace).

**Richard Crashaw** (1613?–1650) is the most notable writer of religious lyrics of the period. He is exceedingly unequal, and probably never corrected what he had written, but at his best he rises to a high pitch of poetical fervor. He wrote *Steps to the Temple*, &c., the fanciful title of a volume of verse, religious and secular, which contains among other things *The Weeper*, *The Flaming Heart*, and *The Music-Duel* between a Lover and a Nightingale, in which the lover is the victor—the last a translation from the Latin. Crashaw, though he disfigures his verse with conceits, is singularly rich in poetical thought, and often singularly happy in his phrases. Cowley, who befriended him in Paris, and admired him both for his poetical ability and for his saintly character, wrote his elegy. He died a canon of the Roman Catholic Church at Loretto in Italy, whither he had gone by way of Paris on being (1644) deprived by the Parliament of his Fellowship at Cambridge. One memorial of his student days deserves to be quoted—the famous verse which describes the miracle of Cana:

"Vidit, et erubuit nympha pudica Deum,"

happily rendered

"The conscious water saw her God, and blushed."

## DRAMATIC POETS

It is claimed for **William Shakespeare** (1564–1616) that he is the greatest of all writers, ancient or modern, and the claim is generally allowed. The greatness of his fame has

naturally excited great interest in his life, and thousands of fancies have been put forth to gratify the very laudable desire to know all about him ; but the facts upon which we can really rely for our knowledge of his personal history still remain sufficiently scanty. He was the third of a family of eight children born in Stratford to John Shakespeare and his wife Mary Arden, both of them Warwickshire people. Through his mother he was connected with the landed gentry ; through his father, a trader in Henley Street, he belonged to a race of yeomen. He was baptized on the 26th of April (old style), 1564, his father being at the time in prosperous circumstances, and looking shortly to be made mayor of Stratford. Fourteen years afterwards John Shakespeare fell into poverty, and the probable effect was the interruption of his son's education. At all events, young Shakespeare, though not without some classical training, had little school learning. His youth seems to have been wild and passionate. Before he was nineteen he married Anne Hathaway, who belonged to the village of Shottery, beside Stratford, and was his senior by seven years. Two or three years later he ran off alone to London to seek his fortune, and by the year 1592 was apparently on the way to find it. He was then connected both as actor and playwright with one of the London theatres. His success was exciting the jealousy of envious men like Greene, and the admiration of candid men like Chettle. In 1593 his first published work appeared—the long descriptive poem of *Venus and Adonis* ; *Lucrece* followed next year. His fame as a poet began with those poems. He was now thirty, and had influential friends—among them the young Earl of Southampton. It was now also that the long and brilliant series of his great plays began rapidly to appear. By the time he was thirty-four he was rich enough to buy one of the best houses, New Place as it was called, in his native Stratford. This was his home for the rest of his life, though his triple connection with the London theatre as actor, playwright, and part proprietor did not permit of his personal settlement in the country till ten or twelve years later.

Shakespeare's career of prosperity met with no reverse, and his genius showed no sign of decay. From the time he purchased New Place he went on amassing property, in houses in London, in both lands and houses in Warwickshire; and from the time when he published his poems he continued to produce an annual supply of plays, each in turn revealing its own distinctive beauties, and all, down to the last, maintaining an almost uniform level of excellence such as one finds in the work of no other author. When at last, not later than the year 1612, and probably earlier, Shakespeare finally retired from London, it was not to sever his connection with the city. He still wrote for the stage in the peace of his garden-house at Stratford, and made yearly visits to the capital on theatrical business. His later plays are redolent not only of the sweetness and sunshine, but also of the purity and serenity of the country. Shakespeare shared his prosperity with his friends and relatives. It is pleasant to know that his parents lived long enough—his father till 1601, his mother till 1608—to rejoice and participate in his prosperity. For his father, in 1597, he procured the right to use armorial bearings, entitling him to rank among the gentry; and he himself is described in a deed of conveyance of the year 1602 as "William Shakespeare, gentleman." Meanwhile his children were growing up; and two of them, his eldest child Susannah—said to have resembled himself both physically and intellectually—and his younger daughter Judith, were well married in Stratford, the former in 1607 to John Hall, a local physician in good practice, the latter in February, 1616, to Thomas Quiney, a wine-merchant in good circumstances. His only son Hamnet, the twin-brother of Judith, died in his twelfth year.

Shakespeare left legacies not only to his relatives, but also to his professional acquaintances and the poor of Stratford. There is abundant proof that he was universally beloved: he was "gentle Shakespeare" among his friends, and he had great personal attractions for winning popular favor—a handsome figure, a noble and placid expression



of countenance, a frank and kindly manner, and a disposition free from envy or jealousy and inclined to help. Yet his life was not unchecked with sorrow, and his writings — and especially his *Sonnets* — reveal a period of mental gloom beginning about the close of the sixteenth century, from which, however, whatever its cause, he emerged to live a man serenely resigned and at peace with the world and himself during the last decade of his life. Ben Jonson's testimony of him bears the stamp of truth: "I loved the man and do honour to his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any. He was indeed honest, and of an open and free nature; had an excellent fancy, brave notions, and gentle expressions, wherein he flowed with such facility that sometimes it was necessary to stop him." He died in his house at Stratford on the fifty-third anniversary of his birth, and was buried in the chancel of Stratford church, where on a flat stone over his grave the inscription from his own pen may still be read:

"Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear  
To dig the dust enclosed here:  
Blest be the man that spares these stones,  
And cursed be he that moves my bones."

Shakespeare's literary work divides into two classes, poems and plays. The poems include *Venus and Adonis*, published in 1593, and *Lucrece*, published in 1594, both belonging to that voluptuous kind of composition of which Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* is the type; *The Lover's Complaint* and the collection known as *The Passionate Pilgrim*, both, doubtless, the work of his early youth; the *Sonnets*, to the number in all of one hundred and fifty-four, written intermittently from perhaps 1592 to 1608 (published in 1609), distinguished for their marvellous poetical beauty both of verse and phrase, and for their dim but undoubted autobiographical interest. The plays number thirty-seven, and admit of a popular classification into tragedies, comedies, and historical dramas. They were only printed in Shakespeare's lifetime surreptitiously, and the folio into

which they were first collected was not published till seven years after his death. It was a matter of great pecuniary importance to the actors to retain Shakespeare's plays in MS. None of the MSS. have come down to us. The likelihood is that the originals perished in the Globe fire in the end of 1613. Shakespeare's best tragedies include *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*; his best comedies *The Merchant of Venice*, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Tempest*. The historical dramas consist of *King Henry VI.* (in three parts), *King Richard III.*, *King John*, *King Richard II.*, *King Henry IV.* (in two parts), *King Henry V.*, and *King Henry VIII.* These are English, and the order here followed is the probable order of composition. There are also the classical historical dramas of *Julius Cæsar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*.

It is impossible in brief space to do justice to the style of Shakespeare. He has twenty styles, and is master of them all. There is no feeling, fancy, or thought possible to human nature which he has not expressed, and expressed in such a way as cannot be amended. There is no type of character he has not portrayed, and he has portrayed all with a vividness that comes up to the actual life. He has sounded all the depths and shoals of passion. Shakespeare has been called "the universal expresser."

"When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,  
 I all alone beweepe my outcast state,  
 And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,  
 And look upon myself, and curse my fate,  
 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
 Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,  
 Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,  
 With what I most enjoy contented least;  
 Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,  
 Haply I think on thee; and then my state—  
 Like to the lark at break of day arising  
 From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate:—

For thy sweet love remembered, such wealth brings,  
That then I scorn to change my state with kings."

—*Sonnet xxix.*

"When to the sessions of sweet silent thought  
I summon up remembrance of things past,  
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,  
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste :  
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,  
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,  
And weep afresh love's long-since-cancelled woe,  
And moan the expense of many a vanished sight ;  
Then can I grieve at grievances fore-gone,  
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er  
The sad account of fore-bemoanéd moan,  
Which I new pay as if not paid before.

But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,  
All losses are restored, and sorrows end."

—*Sonnet xxx.*

"That time of year thou may'st in me behold  
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang  
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,  
Bare, ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.  
In me thou seest the twilight of such day,  
As after sunset fadeth in the west,  
Which by and by black night doth take away,  
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.  
In me thou seest the glowing of such fire,  
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,  
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,  
Consumed with that which it was nourished by.

This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,  
To love that well which thou must leave ere long."

—*Sonnet lxxiii.*

"From you have I been absent in the spring,  
When proud-pied April, dressed in all his trim,  
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing ;  
That heavy Saturn laughed and leaped with him.  
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell  
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,  
Could make me any summer's story tell,  
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew :

Nor did I wonder at the lilies white,  
 Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;  
 They were but sweet, but figures of delight,  
 Drawn after you; you pattern of all those.  
 Yet seemed it winter still, and, you away,  
 As with your shadow I with these did play."

—*Sonnet xxviii.*

"Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
 Admit impediments. Love is not love  
 Which alters when it alteration finds,  
 Or bends with the remover to remove:  
 O no; it is an ever-fixed mark,  
 That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;  
 It is the star to every wandering bark,  
 Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.  
 Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
 Within his bending sickle's compass come:  
 Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
 But bears it out e'en to the edge of doom.  
 If this be error, and upon me proved,  
 I never writ, nor no man ever loved."

—*Sonnet cxvi.*

[It is impossible to do justice to Shakespeare's dramatic poetry by extracts—fortunately he is generally well known; yet a few suggested references may be offered, such as the ghost scene in *Hamlet*, the murder scene in *Macbeth*, the quarrel scene in *Julius Cæsar*, the trial scene in *The Merchant of Venice*, the scene between Hotspur and Glendower in 1 *King Henry IV.*, the forest scenes in *As You Like It*, the shepherds' festival scene in *The Winter's Tale*.]

Like that of Dryden, the family of **Ben Jonson** (1573–1637) belonged originally to the Scottish border. His father, a minister of the reformed doctrine, dying a few weeks before his birth, his mother married again when Ben was a child of two years old, and his step-father, a master brick-layer in London, having no ambition beyond his own trade, the boy was in danger of growing up uneducated, when William Camden, the famous scholar, and at that time one of the masters of Westminster School, undertook and at his own expense carried through the education of the lad till he was

about sixteen. When he left school, a proficient in classical literature, he was put to the trade of bricklaying, from which he revolted and went as a volunteer to Flanders to fight against Spanish tyranny. As a soldier he bravely distinguished himself in single combat during a battle, despatching his adversary in the face of the opposing armies. He was only nineteen when he returned to London. His next part was that of a poor student at Cambridge, but he soon gravitated towards the theatre, first as an actor, then as a playwright. For the profession of acting he had little natural talent, less than Shakespeare, but as a dramatist he soon made his mark, and rose to an eminence inferior only to that of Shakespeare.

His drama was, however, different in kind from that of Shakespeare. Shakespeare's object, or at least his achievement, was the representation of the whole range of human life; Jonson, again, aimed at a correction rather than a reflection of the manners of his age, and generally by a classical style of expression and due observance of the dramatic unities. He was a learned artist elaborating types and qualities, rather than a spontaneous genius creating persons and characters. In comedy Jonson was a satirical dramatist of the peculiarities of his age, and his watchword was reform; Shakespeare was a genial dramatist of human nature as it always is, and his primary object was not to point a moral, but to please. Shakespeare's popularity, therefore, like the scope of his work, is for all time, while Jonson's popularity was only for the age whose humors he satirized.

Rivals though they were by different dramatic methods for popularity, Shakespeare and Jonson were fast friends; and though Jonson in an occasional outburst of splenetic humor sought to check an undiscerning admiration for Shakespeare, yet no one—not even Milton or Dryden—ever pronounced upon him so noble a eulogy. There were personal reasons for Jonson's gratitude to Shakespeare. On the reproduction in 1598 of *Every Man in his Humour*, Jonson's first comedy (written two years before), Shakespeare welcomed it to Blackfriars', and himself filled one of the parts

in the representation. It was a good opening, which unfortunately for his own peace Jonson did not follow up. A trilogy of strongly satirical comedies came next, which roused a feeling of resentment against their author from various quarters. *Every Man out of his Humour*, in 1599, offended the citizens; *Cynthia's Revels*, in 1600, offended the court; and *The Poetaster*, in 1601, offended Dekker and Marston, and indeed the whole of his professional brethren, except Shakespeare, who, conscious of his superiority, but without showing it, could only have been good-humoredly amused at the petulance of Ben. Dekker retorted upon Ben with the bantering parody of *Satiro-Mastix*, and called him, with many other scurrilous personalities, a staring Leviathan. Thereupon Jonson sulked and was silent for two years, and when he reappeared it was in the new character of a writer of tragedy. This was his classical tragedy of *Sejanus* (1603); and here again Shakespeare proved his friendship by taking part in the representation. He had not, however, abandoned "the comic muse," though it had "proved ominous." It was as a writer of comedy he was to win his brightest laurels. In 1605 he brought out *Volpone, or the Fox*; in 1609, *Epicene, or the Silent Woman*; and, in 1610, *The Alchemist*; these are Jonson's best dramatic work. His one other tragedy came in 1611, the classical drama of *Catiline*. Jonson wrote in all about eighteen plays, of which, besides those already named, may be mentioned *Bartholomew Fair* (a satire on the Puritans), *The Staple of News*, *The Magnetic Lady*, *The New Inn*, and *The Tale of a Tub*. Milton has spoken of Jonson's "learned sock," and whether we regard his two classical tragedies or his English comedies, the adjective is well applied to distinguish his dramatic style; the learning is so apparent that he has not quite escaped the charge of pedantry. Yet, in addition to the massive power of his solidly constructed dramas, there ran through his genius a native vein of graceful and delicate fancy, with which he would never have been credited if he had not written certain lovely masques and charming lyrics, and the fine fragment of *The Sad Shepherd*.



In 1619 he was made poet laureate, and in the same year set out on foot on his memorable journey to Scotland. It was on this occasion that he paid his visit to Hawthornden and "sat in Drummond's classic shade." Latterly Jonson fell into ill-health and poverty, and his power declined; but for many years before his death (in 1637) he was—like Dryden, and his namesake of a later generation, the great dictator of letters—listened to with admiring loyalty by a coterie of young aspirants who were proud to constitute "the tribe of Ben." Jonson's physical appearance had much to commend him as a leader of men. In his youth he was tall and gaunt; grim-looking he always was, but in later life he became enormously stout—he speaks of his "mountain belly and his rocky face"—a huge tun of man, wanting only two pound to weigh twenty stone. His disposition was essentially convivial, and his favorite haunt was the Mermaid tavern, founded by Raleigh. Shakespeare, and indeed all the wits of the age, were more or less familiar figures in this famous tavern, and here were indulged those glorious wine and wit combats which Fuller has described for us, and which Herrick plaintively recalled. Jonson lies—or rather stands, for he was buried on his feet—in Westminster Abbey, with the simple epitaph, "O rare Ben Jonson," to mark the place.

"Drink to me only with thine eyes,  
 And I will pledge with mine;  
 Or leave a kiss but in the cup,  
 And I'll not look for wine.  
 The thirst that from the soul doth rise,  
 Doth ask a drink divine;  
 But might I of Jove's nectar sup,  
 I would not change from thine.

"I sent thee late a rosy wreath,  
 Not so much honouring thee,  
 As giving it a hope that there  
 It could not withered be.  
 But thou thereon didst only breathe,  
 And sent'st it back to me;  
 Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,  
 Not of itself, but thee." —*To Celia.*

“It is not growing like a tree  
 In bulk, doth make man better be,  
 Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,  
 To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sear.  
 A lily of a day  
 Is fairer far, in May,  
 Although it fall and die that night,  
 It was the plant and flower of light!  
 In small proportions we just beauties see:  
 And in short measures life may perfect be.”

—*Good Life, Long Life.*

“Underneath this sable hearse  
 Lies the subject of all verse,  
 Sidney’s sister, Pembroke’s mother;  
 Death! ere thou hast slain another,  
 Learned, and fair, and good as she,  
 Time shall throw a dart at thee.”

—*Epitaph on the Countess of Pembroke.*

“Soul of the age!  
 The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage!  
 My Shakespeare, rise! I will not lodge thee by  
 Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie  
 A little further off, to make thee room:  
 Thou art a monument without a tomb,  
 And art alive still, while thy book doth live,  
 And we have wits to read, and praise to give.  
 That I not mix thee so, my brain excuses,  
 I mean with great but disproportioned Muses:  
 For if I thought my judgment were of years,  
 I should commit thee surely with thy peers,  
 And tell how far thou didst our Lyly outshine,  
 Or sporting Kyd or Marlowe’s mighty line.  
 And though thou had small Latin and less Greek,  
 From thence to honour thee I will not seek  
 For names; but call forth thund’ring Æschylus,  
 Euripides, and Sophocles to us,  
 Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead,  
 To live again, to hear thy buskin tread,  
 And shake a stage: or when thy socks were on,  
 Leave thee alone for the comparison  
 Of all that insolent Greece or haughty Rome  
 Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.  
 Triumph, my Britain, thou hast one to show,  
 To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.

He was not of an age, but for all time !  
 And all the Muses still were in their prime,  
 When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm  
 Our ears, or like a Mercury, to charm !  
 Nature herself was proud of his designs,  
 And joyed to wear the dressing of his lines !  
 Which were so richly spun, and woven so fit,  
 As, since, she will vouchsafe no other wit. . . .  
 Yet must I not give nature all ; thine art,  
 My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part.  
 For though the poet's matter nature be,  
 His art doth give the fashion ; and, that he  
 Who casts to write a living line, must sweat—  
 Such as thine are—and strike the second heat  
 Upon the Muses' anvil ; turn the same,  
 And himself with it, that he thinks to frame ;  
 Or for the laurel, he may gain a scorn ;  
 For a good poet's made as well as born.  
 And such wert thou ! Look how the father's face  
 Lives in his issue, even so the race  
 Of Shakespeare's mind and manners brightly shines  
 In his well-turned and true filéd lines :  
 In each of which he seems to shake a lance,  
 As brandished at the eyes of ignorance.  
 Sweet Swan of Avon ! what a sight it were  
 To see thee in our water yet appear,  
 And make those flights upon the banks of Thames  
 That so did take Eliza and our James !”

—To the Memory of Shakespeare.

#### OTHER DRAMATISTS

**George Chapman** (1557-1634), an Oxford scholar, and the friend—almost the rival—of Ben Jonson, with whom and others he sometimes collaborated, wrote, in whole or in part, *All Fools*, *Eastward Ho!* *The May Day*, *The Widow's Tears*, and other plays ; continued, not unsuccessfully, Marlowe's unfinished poem of *Hero and Leander* ; and, best of all, translated Homer, the *Iliad* in 1610-11, and the *Odyssey* 1614-15—the former in stately rhyming lines of fourteen syllables, the latter in the heroic couplet. It is still allowed to be nearest to the original in melody, in spirit, and in simple direct force of any translation of Homer whatever.

**Robert Greene** (1560-1592), a Cambridge graduate, led a wild, licentious life, both on the Continent and in London, deserted his wife, and died of a debauch. He wrote plays, some pretty songs,

and a great quantity of prose. His best play is *The History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. Greene's prose shows the strong influence of Lyly's *Euphues* in his romances; in his tracts he writes without affectation, in a plain, direct style, his opinions on the matters of his day. Chief among those personal tracts are his *Repentance* and his *Groat's Worth of Wit*, in the latter of which he attacks the rising fame of Shakespeare, calling him a Joannes Factotum, a Shakescene, and an upstart crow beautified with stolen feathers.

**Christopher Marlowe** (1564–1593), closing a brilliant dramatic career which achieved great things and promised great things, died tragically, after a brief manhood of godlessness perhaps, of unbridled debauchery certainly. He was born, the son of a shoemaker, at Canterbury, was educated at Cambridge, and took at once, as if by instinct, to the London theatre. He met his death in a tavern scuffle at Deptford. A vulgar quarrel sprang up between him and one Francis Archer, a serving-man, and Archer, in self-defence, accidentally stabbed him with his own dagger. His great works are *Tamburlaine*, *Doctor Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta*, and a historical drama, *Edward the Second*. These are powerful but irregular tragedies, exhibiting the operation of consuming passions, and strongly arousing in the reader the emotions of horror, terror, and pity. Marlowe has been praised for his mighty line; and there can be no doubt that he first developed the capabilities of blank-verse. His influence is visible in several ways on the genius of Shakespeare; it may be seen in the construction of Shakespeare's tragic verse, in the conception of Shylock, and in the magnificent series of his historical plays. Scarcely, if at all, inferior to his dramatic power was Marlowe's art as a descriptive and narrative poet. His unfinished *Hero and Leander* is full of a sensuous beauty. Marlowe's death left the empire of the stage open to Shakespeare.

Two powerful tragedies by **John Webster**, who was flourishing at the close of the sixteenth century, and of whom little personal is known—*Vittoria Corrombona*; or, *The White Devil*, and *The Duchess of Malfi*—cannot be passed unnoticed. The former is the more sublime and perfect work; but both contain, besides abundance of tragic horrors, many true poetical touches.

**John Fletcher** (1576–1625) and **Francis Beaumont** (1586–1615), usually associated together as Beaumont and Fletcher, were gentlemen by birth as well as by education. Fletcher, a Cambridge man, was a son of the Bishop of London; while Beaumont, who was educated at Oxford, was the son of a chief-justice. They produced a very great number of plays—about fifty—one-third of which, including the two best, they wrote in collaboration. The

two referred to are *The Maid's Tragedy* and *Philaster*. Judges are mostly agreed that Fletcher was mainly the inventive or creating, and Beaumont mainly the critical and correcting, partner. They took Shakespeare as their guide rather than Ben Jonson, and so belong to the romantic and not to the classical school of English drama. Their merits are many, the chief being their skill in dramatic construction, their ease in dialogue, the many fine poetical passages and lyrical gems which they introduce, and their power of comic characterization and situation. Their chief failing is a want of heroic passion, a tendency to commonplace, and, perhaps, a weakening of the blank-verse, at least for tragedy, by the common use of feminine endings; and their great fault is immorality of scene or plot, and indecency of language. To these, the only "gentlemen" dramatists of their time, a lowering of the moral standard of the Elizabethan drama is distinctly to be charged. It may be said in mitigation of this offence against decency, that they only reflected the morals of their age; the standard was higher in the reign of Elizabeth than in that of James I. Among their best plays, besides the two already named, the following may be included: *The Scornful Lady*, *The Beggar's Bush*, *The Humorous Lieutenant*, *The Faithful Shepherdess*, the last-named a pastoral (by Fletcher alone) of the class of Jonson's *Sad Shepherd* and Milton's *Comus*; the tragedies of *Valentinian*, *The False One*, *Bonduca*, and *Thierry and Theodoret*; and the comedies of *The Little French Lawyer*, *The Coxcomb*, and *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, usually given to Fletcher, is generally allowed to contain traces in language, if not in plot or character, of the great pen of Shakespeare. On the other hand, well-known passages in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII.* are believed to show traces of the art of Fletcher.

**Philip Massinger** (1584-1639), in spite of his coarse language, must be regarded in his characterizations as a dramatic moralist. He wrote during the last twenty years of his life nearly forty plays, half of which are lost. He collaborated with other writers. The chief of his plays are *The Virgin Martyr*, *The City Madam*, and *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*. The last-named contains the powerfully-drawn character of Sir Giles Overreach, upon the outwitting of whose greed the plot turns. Massinger's verse is strong and harmonious, and rises naturally with the subject. His comedies, without being dull, are deficient in fun, and his humor is of the grim, almost tragic, cast. He was a scholar of Oxford, but little is known of his life, and he died in such obscurity that he was buried as "a stranger," though possibly the entry in the burial-register at St. Saviour's, Southwark, only means that he was not a native of the parish.

**James Shirley** (1594–1666) is the last of the great Elizabethan line of dramatists. After him come Davenant and Dryden, who belong to quite another school. He was a native of London, and educated at Merchant Taylors' and both Oxford and Cambridge. He became a clergyman, but spent most of his time as a school-master both before and after the closing of the theatres (in 1642), with a brief interlude of soldiering in the Royalist ranks. He was driven from his house by the Great Fire, and died shortly afterwards on the same day as his wife. He wrote a great deal, and at about the same respectable but never-commanding level. Probably his best pieces are *The Lady of Pleasure* and a tragedy named *The Traitor*.

### PROSE WRITERS

**Francis Bacon, Viscount St. Albans** (1561–1626)—better known by his popular title of Lord Bacon—was the youngest son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, lord keeper, and nephew of Lord Burleigh, lord treasurer of England. He was born in London, educated at home, probably under the care of his mother, one of the most learned women of her time, and sent to Trinity College, Cambridge, in his twelfth year. There he continued only three years, being dissatisfied with the course and methods of study. He now turned his attention to the legal profession, and, becoming a student of Gray's Inn, was called to the bar at the age of twenty-one. He had previously spent about three years in France, from which country he returned to England on the unexpected death of his father. As his uncle, for some unexplained reason, refused to help him, he was thrown on his own resources, and, combining great legal acumen with oratorical ability, he soon began to make his mark in Parliament, which he had entered in 1584. He offended the queen by a speech in opposition to the government, and when the attorney-generalship fell vacant, though Bacon's claim to the office was supported by the Earl of Essex, the post was bestowed upon Coke. Thereupon Essex generously presented him with a small estate of the value of £1800.

Bacon has been accused of ingratitude to Essex, but the charge as formulated by Pope, that, for this and later of-



fences which have been preferred against him, he was "the meanest of mankind," has been too readily indorsed by the popular judgment. It is certain that when Essex, by his own headstrong imprudence, fell into disgrace and danger, Bacon did all he could to save him; and it is equally certain that if he had not been commanded to draw up a statement of the treasonable practices of Essex, with which the queen sought to justify the earl's execution for attempted rebellion in 1601, he would not have done so of his own accord; as it was, his *Declaration of the Treasons of Essex* failed, from its leniency, to satisfy Elizabeth; and Bacon's *Apology* for writing the *Declaration* amply clears him of the accusation of ingratitude.

It was not till the reign of James I. that Bacon began to rise to a high position of political and professional influence. In 1603 he was knighted. In 1605 he published, with a dedication to the king, his famous *Advancement of Learning*; he had previously published, in 1597, the first edition of his *Essays*. Even under James, Bacon's rise was at first very slow. Solicitor-general in 1607, he became at last (1613) attorney-general, on the promotion, which he himself had advised, of his rival Coke to a judgeship. In 1616 Coke, who had taken the popular side against the king, was dismissed from office, and Bacon rose on the downfall of Coke. In 1617 he became lord keeper, in 1618 he was created Baron Verulam and appointed lord chancellor of England, and in 1621 he was raised to the peerage, with the title of Viscount St. Albans. Meantime his reputation as a philosopher who had discovered a *Novum Organum* for scientific research was spreading. Yet it was in the year of his greatest power and eminence that he fell. The cause of it was undoubtedly the personal envy and hatred of Coke. The charge brought against him was that of taking bribes for the perversion of justice. Bacon acknowledged the acceptance of presents from litigants, but denied that he had at any time let it influence his decisions. There is absolutely no reason to doubt his denial. And this may be said in palliation of his admitted guilt, that in accepting presents from

suitors at his tribunal, he was doing no more than his predecessors in office had been in the practice of doing. Bacon had an unusually strong temptation to continue the imprudent, if not iniquitous, practice, in the circumstance that he was a poor man involved inextricably in debt, and at the same time, from his luxurious nature, utterly incapable of economy. He was declared guilty, deposed, fined, and imprisoned. The imprisonment was only nominal—two or three days in the Tower—the fine was cancelled, and Bacon was forgiven; but he was banished from London and the court. He made a wise use of his compulsory retirement from public life, but seems to have had good reason, in his retention of the king's favor, to cherish the hope of complete restoration. In the meanwhile he gave his attention to philosophical and literary work. And it was his devotion to science that at last and quite unexpectedly brought his life to a premature close. One wintry day in March, 1626, when out driving, he caught a deadly chill by experimenting with snow upon the carcass of a fowl. The illness came upon him so suddenly that his coachman, in alarm, drove him to the nearest convenient house, which happened to be Lord Arundel's, and there, in a few days, he died of feverish cold.

Bacon's works are partly in Latin and partly in English. Of the English language as a medium of thought he had a poor opinion, which the language has avenged, for it is only his English works that are now read. He wrote in Latin that he might reach beyond provincial England to the ears of Continental scholars. His English works consist of *The Advancement of Learning*, 1605; miscellaneous *Essays*, numbering in the enlarged edition of 1625 fifty-eight in all; and a *History of Henry VII.*, published 1622. Bacon's style in these works is clear, picturesque, and pithy. The *Essays* deal with very various subjects, but all have the attraction of being connected with human nature. The expression could not be more condensed if the author had been trying to pack as much matter as possible into the smallest possible space. The collection is an endless storehouse of sug-

gestive ideas. Bacon's Latin works are mainly two: *The New Atlantis*—a story, like *Utopia*, of a model commonwealth in the Southern seas; and the *Instauratio Magna Scientiarum* (the Great Instauration of the Sciences). This great philosophic work was left incomplete by its author. Its divisions are given, and the scope of the whole is indicated. The divisions are: 1, De Augmentis Scientiarum (an enlargement of his English treatise *The Advancement of Learning*); 2, Novum Organum; 3, Sylva Sylvarum; 4, Scala Intellectus; 5, Prodrumi; and 6, Philosophia Secunda. In the first part or section of the work the field of knowledge is surveyed and laid out. In the second the new method for the attainment of knowledge is unfolded—the method of Induction, proceeding on the two principles of observation and experiment. In the third some materials and facts from the phenomena of nature are brought together for the new method to operate upon. In the fourth the art or operation of induction, which is the essential part of the new method, is illustrated. In the fifth a foretaste or specimen anticipations of the New Philosophy are given. The sixth part is merely named.

The Chrysostom of England, and more “golden-mouthed” than John of Antioch, being indeed the most eloquent of divines of any age or country, **Jeremy Taylor** (1613-1667) was born of humble parents in Cambridge, educated as a sizar at Caius College in that university town from his thirteenth to his twentieth year, and on entering the Church, for which his natural piety and charity fitted him no less than his learning and eloquence, had the good-fortune to come under the notice of Archbishop Laud—the steady patron of learning and piety—and was by that prelate recommended to an Oxford fellowship, and presented to the living of Up-pingham. Here Taylor had not been settled more than seven years when the civil war began, and he was driven from his rural rectory by the Puritans of Rutlandshire, with whom in politics he had no sympathy. He became a chaplain in the king's army, and continued in that wandering

office until the defeat at Naseby, in 1645, destroyed the last hopes of the Royalists. He suffered imprisonment, not once only, in the king's cause; but for the thirteen years which preceded the Restoration he lived a free, happy, and busy life in an obscure Welsh village, where he kept school, married a small heiress, and wrote nearly all his books, and certainly his best ones. In 1660 he was appointed to the Irish bishopric of Down and Connor, but the see became "a place of torment" to him from the unrelenting opposition which the Ulster Presbyterians offered to his spiritual views and claims. He retained the dignity, however, till his death in 1667.

Taylor's works include his *Life of Christ*, a course of sermons entitled *Golden Grove*, and his famous and ever-popular *Holy Living and Holy Dying*. His style is singularly rich and ornate, continually lit up with illustrative similes, which are often poems in miniature. The sentences are often loose and illogically connected, and his mannerism of "So have I seen" in introducing a comparison is a common flaw on the surface of pure and exalted eloquence. He has been called "the Shakespeare of prose" and "the Spenser of divinity"; all agree that he is one of the greatest prose writers of our country.

#### OTHER PROSE WRITERS

Sir Walter Raleigh (1552-1618), as courtier, soldier, statesman, sailor, navigator, discoverer, and colonizer, belongs to history; as historian and poet, to literature. His chief prose work is a *History of the World*, written while he lay for twelve years (1603-1615) prisoner in the Tower. The History begins with the creation, and is brought down to the fall of the Macedonian empire about 170 B.C. Ben Jonson told Drummond of Hawthornden that the "best wits in England were employed in making his History," and that he, Ben, himself had contributed a piece on the Punic wars, which Raleigh "altered and set in his book." There can be little doubt that the History was largely a compilation; but if the preface was from his pen, which can hardly be denied, the noblest passages were clearly the work of Raleigh.

Richard Hooker (1553-1600) was one of the earliest and one of the three or four greatest prose writers of the period. The story

of his life has been pleasantly told by Izaak Walton. He belonged to Exeter, the studious son of poor parents, was sent to Oxford by Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury, and greatly distinguished himself there as a scholar in almost every branch of study. His piety was as conspicuous as his learning; yet he was, all through life, the most modest and submissive of men. He entered the Church, and shortly afterwards was entrapped, with the bait of being made more comfortable, into marrying his landlady's daughter, with whom, "for she was a silly woman and a mere Xantippe," he led anything but a comfortable life. When he was trying to entertain some distinguished friends in his humble rectory, she called him away to rock the cradle. It was by the offices of these friends that he was promoted to the Mastership of the Temple in London. With his colleague at the Temple he found it impossible to get on amicably, and resigned the appointment to accept a country rectory in Wiltshire, on the ground that "God and Nature did not intend him for contentions, but for study and quietness." Here he wrote the first part of his great work, *The Ecclesiastical Polity*. In 1595 the queen presented him to the living of Bishop's Bourne, in Kent, where he completed his congenial task in comparative comfort. His book is an explanation and defence of the system of the English Church; the argument is clearly expressed and closely urged on broad principles, and with such candor and moderation as to have procured for the author the designation of Judicious. The language is always dignified, equally free from vulgarity in its idiomatic ease and from pedantry in its fulness of learning.

**John Lyly**, born about ten years before Shakespeare, and educated at Oxford, is lost among the minor dramatists of the time, but is still remembered for his lyrics of *Cupid and Campaspe* and *The Fairies*, and more especially for his prose work, in which he introduced a new and exceedingly odd style of writing, named from a word of his own invention, Euphuism. The work, which is a kind of dull Italian love-story, consists of two parts—*Euphues, the Anatomy of Wit*, and *Euphues and his England*—written when Lyly was about twenty-five. The style is the remarkable thing about this early novel; it is affected in the last degree, the object being to invent a sort of English removed from the common speech, which should be set apart as the vehicle of literature. The idea had already begun in France among the "rhetoricians" when Lyly made his attempt in English. Its twin features are antithesis and simile; and these tricks of speech occur in every sentence, producing a peculiarly stilted and tedious effect. Yet the fashion of Euphuism lasted half a century. Sidney felt it, though he did not entirely give way to it. Shakespeare satirized it. Scott's representation of it in *The Monastery* is far from a correct



imitation. Among Lyly's nine or ten plays may be mentioned *Endymion* and *The Maid's Metamorphosis*.

**Robert Burton** (1576-1639), the author of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, a book written leisurely during many studious years, packed full of quaint quotations and information on an infinite variety of subjects, and purporting to expound the nature, causes, symptoms, effects, and cure of melancholy, spent the last forty years of his life more or less continuously at Christ Church College, Oxford, nursing his hypochondria, and enjoying various livings, to which he gave the prescribed minimum of his attention.

**Izaak Walton** (1593-1683), the ever-fresh and popular author of *The Compleat Angler*, and the pleasant biographer of several eminent clergymen, lived ninety years, and enjoyed life to the last. He was a man of a singularly cheerful, equable, and peace-loving temperament, who left London, where he carried on an easy, successful business as a linen-draper, in order to avoid the confusion of the Civil War and indulge his favorite pastime with unmolested mind. The charm of his book lies in the revelation of the writer's own personality, and the glimpses of rural scenery and rustic life which, for the most part incidentally, light up the pages.

**Sir Thomas Browne** (1605-1682) was the son of a London merchant, and educated at Oxford. He travelled abroad, and studied medicine at Leyden; then, taking up the profession of a doctor, without the need of earning a livelihood, settled at Norwich, and acquired a great reputation for science. He was one of the early Fellows of the Royal Society, and received knighthood from Charles II. in 1662. He wrote *Religio Medici* before he was thirty; his other learned works include *Hydriotaphia or Urn-Burial*, his masterpiece; *The Garden of Cyrus*, and an *Enquiry into Vulgar Errors*. The *Urn-Burial*, called forth by the discovery of forty or fifty sepulchral urns in a field in Norfolkshire, is in substance an eloquent monologue on the earth as a vast charnel-field, and the vanity of human ambition. The book was a great favorite with Charles Lamb. The style is marked by Latinisms; and Browne, whom Johnson edited in his younger days, is blamed for the ponderosity of Johnson. The *Vulgar Errors* volume is the most popular of his books, from its full and quaint discussion of such popular superstitions as the belief that the forbidden fruit was an apple, that there was no rainbow before the Flood, that one is heavier before taking food than after, that to meet a wolf and be first seen by it begets dumbness, and such curious questions as pigmies, the horned Moses, the black skins of negroes, and the Eastern practice of saluting a man when he sneezes.

**Thomas Fuller** (1608-1661), a native, like Dryden twenty-three



years after him, of Aldwinkle in Northamptonshire, was educated for the Church at Cambridge, and rose rapidly in his profession. On the outbreak of civil war he cast in his lot with the Royalists, and as regimental chaplain led a wandering life, which he utilized by the personal collection of local facts and traditions for his great work, *The Worthies of England*. Nothing pleased him better than a gossip with the oldest inhabitant of some historical village, unless it was to reproduce from his wizard memory, but in his own quaintly picturesque and witty style, the information he had thus obtained. The bent of his mind was to history and biography. So early as 1640 he had already published his *History of the Holy War*. It was followed sixteen years later, when the Civil War was over and he was once more settled in London, by his *Church History of Britain*. *The Worthies of England* was his last and great work, not published till the year after his death. It is an extraordinary collection, almost encyclopædian, of the antiquities, traditions, and proverbial philosophy, the histories of notable persons and famous places, of the various counties of England, described in a strain of lively wit and humor, in which picturesque similes and jocular anecdotes are forever alternating. *Hudibras* is hardly fuller of fanciful images and pithy phrases than the works of Fuller. His one great object in composition seems to have been to present his idea wittily. But beneath all his jocularity there is a large fund of good-sense and sagacity, combined with sincerity, piety, and benevolence. His description, for example, of negroes as "God's images cut in ebony" is not less kindly conceived than it is quaintly expressed. He wrote also on theological subjects in the same style; such are his treatises on *The Holy and Profane State* and *A Pisgah-Sight of Palestine*.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1680) to the greatest physical timidity united the utmost intellectual daring. He was born at Malmesbury in the Armada year, educated at Oxford, and after long travelling and living abroad, acting as tutor and secretary to royal and aristocratic persons, and enjoying the friendship or hostility of some of the most eminent thinkers and scholars of his time, died at the great age of ninety-two, within eight years of the Revolution. In 1610 he was tutor to the future Earl of Devonshire, and maintained his connection in one capacity or another, off and on, with the Cavendish family for about seventy years. But in 1647 he also acted as tutor to the Prince of Wales, afterwards Charles II. Among his associates were Bacon, Ben Jonson, Descartes, Galileo, Lord Herbert, Selden, Cowley, Harvey, etc.; and he is memorable for his disputation with Bishop Bramhall on a question of metaphysics, and with Wallis, the Oxford

professor, on a question of mathematics. He read little—he used to say that if he had read as much as others he would have been as ignorant; but he thought vigorously, and what he thought vigorously he expressed vigorously. There is no beating about the bush with Hobbes; he is clear and direct—believes (like Swift) in nouns and verbs, and hardly ever waits for the ornament of an adjective. No man had ever more confidence in his opinions or showed more courage in disclosing them than Hobbes. His great works bear the fanciful titles of *Leviathan* and *Behemoth*. He also wrote a treatise on *Human Nature*, and he translated Homer into hard, unpoetical English quatrains, in the style of his friend Davenant's *Gondibert*. *Behemoth* is a history of the Civil War from 1640 to 1660. His masterpiece is *Leviathan*, and its publication, besides provoking his political opponents, raised against him the cry of "Atheist!" His principal position, which he occupies and defends with great force and candor of speech and argument, may be briefly stated. He traces the practice of morality to its origin in a prudent selfishness; friendship is merely a sense of mutual utility; the religious sentiment originates in a fear of invisible powers; mankind are not free agents, but subject to a law of necessity; they are by nature ferocious, and they contracted covenants with each other for the formation of communities that they might protect and defend each other. Thus was created "that great Leviathan called the Commonwealth or State, which is but an artificial man, though of greater stature and strength than the natural, for whose protection and defence it was intended." From this idea of the formation of a State comes his view of monarchy. The community resigned all rights into the hands of one ruler; they gave him the power, and it was given for the sole end of the common weal; he represented all, and he was necessarily despotic. Locke's view was so far the same as Hobbes's—but he retained to the people the right of resistance if their delegated power was being used for another end than that for which it was given.

Edward Hyde, Lord Clarendon (1608–1674), was born and died in the same year as Milton. Of a good Cheshire family, he was educated at Oxford, trained to the profession of the law, and entered Parliament in 1640. His political career belongs to history. It was while an exile in France during the last seven years of his life that he wrote his famous work, *The Great Rebellion*—for so the Royalists regarded the opposition of Parliament to the misrule of Charles I. The excellences of the work lie in the general fairness of the history to men like Cromwell, in the lifelike portraits with which the narrative abounds, and in the skill and ease of the narrative; the great demerit of the style is the incessant use of

long disjointed paragraph-sentences. Clarendon's style is in this respect a contrast to Hobbes's.

# I. A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF AUTHORS FROM 1580 TO 1660

## (A) Surviving from last Period

- 1527-1605. John Stow, chronicler.
- 1536 ?-1608. Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, Earl of Dorset, poet.
- 1543-1608. John Still, Bishop, dramatist.

## (B) Belonging to the Period

- 1551-1623. William Camden, historian.
- 1552-1618. Sir Walter Raleigh, historian and poet.
- 1552 ?-1599. Edmund Spenser, poet.
- 1553-1600. Richard Hooker, theologian, etc.
- 1553-1616. Richard Hakluyt, narrator of voyages.
- 1554-1586. Sir Philip Sidney, poet and prose writer.
- 1554-? John Lyly, dramatist, poet, and prose writer.
- 1555-1615 ? Henry Constable, writer of sonnets and miscellaneous poems.
- 1556 ?-1625 ? Thomas Lodge, dramatist.
- 1588—. Thomas Kyd, dramatist.
- 1557-1634. George Chapman, dramatist and poet.
- 1558-1609. William Warner, narrative poet and prose writer.
- 1560-1592. Robert Greene, dramatist.
- 1560 ?-1626. Sir John Davies, poet.
- 1560 ?-1595. Robert Southwell, poet.
- 1561-1612. Sir John Harrington, translator of Ariosto's Orlando Furioso.
- 1600—. Edward Fairfax, translator of Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered.
- 1561-1626. Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, Viscount St. Albans, philosopher, historian, essayist.
- 1562-1619. Samuel Daniel, poet.
- 1563-1631. Michael Drayton, poet.
- 1563 ?-1618. Joshua Sylvester, translator of Du Bartas's Divine Weeks.
- 1564-1593. Christopher Marlowe, dramatist and poet.
- 1564-1616. William Shakespeare, dramatist and poet.
- 1566-1625. King James I. of England, (Scottish) prose writer.
- 1570 ?-1627. Thomas Middleton, dramatist.
- 1590—. Thomas Nash, dramatist.

- 1607—. John Webster, dramatist.  
 1573-1626. John Donne, satirical poet.  
 1573-1637. Ben Johnson, dramatist.  
 1574-1656. Joseph Hall, Bishop, satirical poet, and theologian.  
 1575 ?-1633. John Marston, dramatist.  
     To this time belong a great many minor drama-  
     tists, of whom the chief perhaps are: Thomas  
     Dekker, William Rowley, Cyril Tourneur, Thom-  
     as Nabbes, and John Day.  
 1576-1625. John Fletcher, dramatist and poet.  
 1576-1639. Robert Burton, prose writer (Anatomy of Melancholy).  
 1578-1644. George Sandys, translator of Ovid, and sacred poet.  
 1580-1640. Sir William Alexander, Earl of Stirling, (Scottish)  
     poet.  
 1581-1613. Sir Thomas Overbury, writer of character-sketches.  
 1583-1648. Lord Herbert of Cherbury, philosopher, etc.  
     Also, between 1580 and 1590, the brothers Fletch-  
     er, Giles and Phineas, poets, sons of Dr. Giles  
     Fletcher, himself a poet of the amatory kind, and  
     cousins of John Fletcher, the poet-dramatist who  
     collaborated with Beaumont.  
 1583-1639. Philip Massinger, dramatist.  
 1584-1654. John Selden, scholar, author of Table Talk, etc.  
 1585-1649. William Drummond, of Hawthornden, (Scottish)  
     poet.  
 1586-1615. Francis Beaumont, dramatist.  
 1586-? John Ford, dramatist.  
 1588-1680. Thomas Hobbes, philosopher.  
 1588-1667. George Wither, poet.  
 1589-1639. Thomas Carew, poet.  
 1590-1650 ? William Browne, poet.  
 1592-1644. Francis Quarles, poet.  
 1593-1633. George Herbert, poet.  
 1593-1683. Izaak Walton, writer on angling, etc.  
 1594-1666. James Shirley, dramatist.  
 1594-1674. Robert Herrick, poet.  
 1601-1665. John Earle, Bishop, writer of character-sketches.  
 1605-1682. Sir Thomas Browne, philosopher.  
 1608-1642. Sir John Suckling, poet.  
 1608-1661. Thomas Fuller, historian, etc.  
 1608-1674. Edward Hyde, Lord Clarendon, historian.  
 1608-1674. John Milton, poet.  
 1613?-1650. Richard Crashaw, poet.  
 1613-1658. John Cleveland, satirical poet.  
 1613-1667. Jeremy Taylor, theologian.

## II. A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF WORKS PUBLISHED BETWEEN 1580 AND 1660.

1580. Lyly's *Euphues* and his England.
1581. Sir Philip Sidney's *Apology for Poetry* *written*—not published till 1595.
1582. Hakluyt's *Voyages* (American).
1586. Camden's *Britannia* (enlarged in 1607); Warner's *Albion's England*; Marlowe's *Faustus* perhaps *acted*.
1590. Sidney's *Arcadia*; Spenser's *Faërie Queene*, Books I.-III.
1593. Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*.
1594. Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Books I.-IV.; Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece*; Southwell's *Mary Magdalen's Funeral Tears*; Spenser's *Colin Clout's Come Home Again*, *Epithelamium*, etc.
1596. Davis's *Orchestra*—a philosophical poem on "dancing"; Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour* *acted*; *Faërie Queene*, Books IV.-VI.
1597. Bacon's *Essays* (ten in this edition); Hall's *Virgidemiarum* (first part); Shakespeare's *Richard II.* and *Richard III.*
1598. Chapman's *Translation of Iliad*, Books I., II., and VII.-XI.; Sylvester's "*Du Bartas*"; Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *Henry IV.*, Part I.
1599. Shakespeare's *Passionate Pilgrim*, and *Romeo and Juliet*.
1600. Fairfax's *Tasso*; Shakespeare's *Henry IV.*, Part II., *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado About Nothing*.
1601. Jonson's *Poetaster*.
1602. *Hamlet* *acted*.
1603. Florio's translation of *Montaigne's Essays*; Jonson's *Sejanus*; *Hamlet* first printed.
1604. James I.'s *Counterblast*; Marlowe's *Faustus* published.
1605. Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*.
1608. *King Lear* published.
1609. Daniel's *Civil Wars*; Jonson's *Epicene*; Shakespeare's *Sonnets*.
1610. Chapman's *Iliad*, I.-XII. (finished next year); John Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess*; *Macbeth* *acted*.
1611. Winter's *Tale* *acted*; Jonson's *Catiline* *acted*; Authorized Version of Bible.
1612. Webster's *Vittoria Corrombona* printed.
1613. Browne's *Britannia's Pastorals*; Drayton's *Polyolbion* (Part I.); Drummond's *Cypress Grove*; Wither's *Abuses Stript and Whipt*.

1614. Overbury's Characters ; Raleigh's History of the World.
1615. Camden's Annals (Part I.).
1616. Drummond of Hawthornden's Poems ; Webster's Duchess of Malfi *acted*.
1618. Ecclesiastical Polity, Books VI.-VIII.
1620. Bacon's Novum Organum.
1621. Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy.
1622. Polyolbion (complete) ; Massinger's (or Dekker's ?) Virgin Martyr ; Othello printed.
1623. First Folio edition of Shakespeare's Plays.
1626. Sandys's Ovid's Metamorphoses.
1627. Bacon's New Atlantis (translation in 1629) ; Drayton's Ballad on Battle of Agincourt.
1631. Herbert's The Temple.
1633. Phineas Fletcher's Purple Island ; Massinger's New Way to Pay Old Debts.
1634. Comus *acted*.
1635. Quarles's Divine Emblems.
1637. Comus published ; Lycidas written.
1639. Fuller's History of the Holy War.
1640. Carew's Poems.
1642. Religio Medici, by Sir T. Browne ; Denham's Cooper's Hill ; Fuller's Holy State.
1644. Milton's Areopagitica ; Waller's Poems.
1646. Crashaw's Steps to the Temple.
1648. Herrick's Hesperides.
1650. Baxter's Saints' Everlasting Rest ; Jeremy Taylor's Holy Living.
1651. Cleveland's Poems ; Hobbes's Leviathan ; Milton's Defensio pro Populo Anglicano ; Taylor's Holy Dying.
1653. Walton's Compleat Angler.
1656. Cowley's Davideis ; Fuller's Church History.
1658. Dryden's Stanzas on the Death of Cromwell.
1660. Dryden's Astræa Redux.



## 1660-1789

### FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

THE range is over one hundred and thirty eventful years, and extends from the recall of the Stuarts, through the remaining reigns of that ill-fated dynasty, down to the middle of the reign of George III. in the Hanoverian line. The succession of sovereigns in the period is as follows: STUARTS—Charles II., James II., William and Mary, Anne; GUELPHS—George I., George II., George III. The chief events of British history affecting more or less directly the literary growth of the period are here presented as they occurred in the successive reigns:\*

**Reign of Charles II., 1660-1685.**—Establishment of the restored Church and State by the enactments of the Clarendon Code. The Great Plague, followed by the Great Fire of London, with the erection of the Monument. The Dutch in the Thames. Intrigues of the Cabal and attempted restoration of Catholicism, followed by the Popish Plot. Persecution of the Covenanters in Scotland. The Exclusion Bill, strife between Whig and Tory, and the Rye-House Plot.

**Reign of James II., 1685-1688.**—Monmouth's rebellion, followed by the Bloody Assize. Schemes of the king for despotic power and the restoration of Catholicism. Persecution in Scotland. National opposition to the king roused by "Lillibullero," the Dec-

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\* A useful exercise for the young student would be to go over the historical summary of the reigns, apportioning to each event whatever literary productions may be connected with it. *Ex. gr.*, the Restoration produced *Astræa Redux*; the downfall of Puritan rule, *Hudibras*; the Great Fire of London, *Annus Mirabilis*; the Clarendon Code, *The Non-Juror*; the erection of the Monument, Pope's lines about "the tall bully"; the Exclusion Bill, the attack upon Shaftesbury (Achitophel), etc.

laration of Indulgence, and the Trial of the Bishops. Revolution.

*Note.*—During these two reigns the population of England and Scotland together numbered only about six millions. The trade of the country was on the whole in a flourishing condition. In 1662 the Royal Society was founded; but in the same year the Licensing Act set injurious limits to the freedom of the press.

**Reign of William III. (Mary joint-sovereign till her death in 1694), 1688–1702.**—The Constitution established on a Protestant basis, and supremacy of Parliament secured; followed by the appearance of Non-Jurors and Jacobites. Battles of Boyne and Killiecrankie. War against Louis XIV. The Glencoe Massacre, and the failure of the Darien Scheme. Act of Settlement.

*Note.*—During most part of this reign trade was in a languishing state, owing to the war with France. The Civil List was instituted. Peter the Great visited England in 1697; in the following year the S.P.C.K. was founded.

**Reign of Anne, 1702–1714.**—Protestantism and the Supremacy of Parliament maintained. Marlborough's victories — Blenheim in 1704. Union of the Scots Parliament with the English in 1707. Struggle for place between Whig and Tory.

*Note.*—In this reign the newspaper press began to be a power in the country. The G.P.O. was established in 1710. Of foreign contemporary events, the defeat of Charles XII. of Sweden at Pultowa in 1709 is perhaps the most memorable.

**Reign of George I., 1714–1727.**—Protestantism and Parliamentary government continued; the Whigs in power. Opposition of the Jacobites—"The Fifteen." The South Sea "Bubble"; followed by the long, peaceful, and prosperous administration of Sir Robert Walpole. Wood's "Ha'pence."

**Reign of George II., 1727–1760.**—Protestantism and supremacy of Parliament continued. The Porteous Riots in Edinburgh. War with Spain; Anson's great voyage; fall of Walpole. War of the Austrian Succession, and "The Forty-Five." Seven Years' War with France — victory of Plassy in 1757, capture of Quebec in 1759.

**Reign of George III., 1760–1789 (continued till 1820).**—Protestantism maintained, but with attempt on the king's part for personal government. Treaty of Paris, and Wilkes's criticism of the "King's Speech." War with the American colonies. Abolition of penal laws against Catholics, followed by No-Popery Riots, and (among other acts of vandalism) the burning of Lord Mansfield's library.

*Note.*—Trade revived during the first of these three reigns,

and was in an unusually flourishing condition under George III., accompanied by a phenomenal rise of towns, a wide, various, and rapid extension of manufactures, and numerous industrial inventions. The tone of morality, which had been lowered under George I., gradually improved; the fine arts, which had at first been neglected, revived without royal patronage. Among great names in art are those of Hogarth and Reynolds; in science, Arkwright and Watt. A new system of agriculture came in about 1730. *The Gentleman's Magazine* was founded in 1731; the first mail-coach started in 1784.

### INTRODUCTION

In a general survey of the literary field of this period the most obvious features are the development of the prose and the restraint of the verse. Not only does prose now for the first time in the history of our literature take its due place as a form of literary expression, but it even predominates over the verse. One is struck at once with its vast amount, its rapid development, its high standard of excellence, and the variety of its forms. The period, indeed, is the great prose age of English literature. The greatest names belong to prose. They include Bunyan, Newton, Locke, Congreve, Swift, Berkeley, Addison, Lord Shaftesbury, Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, Hume, Smollett, Burke, Johnson, Robertson, Sterne, Goldsmith, Adam Smith, and Gibbon. On the other hand, the list of the great verse-writers is limited to the names of Dryden, Pope, Thomson, Gray, Cowper, and Burns. It is to be noted, too, that some of the verse-writers wrote admirable prose.

The history of the prose-style of the period begins with Dryden, and the style develops with surprising rapidity and wonderful variety all down the course. It was already modern before it left the seventeenth century. The long, lumbering sentences, overloaded with

imagery and choked with parentheses, disappeared. All through the period the influence of the French style of writing was more or less felt on the manner of English prose. This influence first showed itself in the Restoration age in short, clear, and neatly turned sentences ; the clearness and neatness, with added graces, continued to the times of Addison and Goldsmith ; Johnson, while still retaining the terseness of Dryden, introduced the pomp and roll, and a good deal of the heaviness, of the Latin style ; and his example was followed by Gibbon and Burke—the former, however, lightening his Latin-English with imagination, the latter with passion. The Scottish writers, Hume, Robertson, Adam Smith, were directly under the influence of the French style, and owed little or no allegiance to Johnson. The masters of style were Dryden, clear, concise, and vigorous ; Temple, pleasant and refined ; Swift, cool and trenchant ; Berkeley, lucid and scholarly ; Addison, always charming and reposeful ; Johnson, weighty and well-balanced ; Goldsmith, graceful and easy ; Gibbon, splendid ; and Burke, magnificent.

Prose was applied to a variety of new literary uses in this period. Chief among these were criticism, the periodical essay, the novel, and history. Criticism, begun by Dryden, was continued on the classical side by Bentley, on the modern side by Dennis, Addison, Lord Shaftesbury, Warton, and Johnson. The periodical essay, unsuccessfully introduced by Defoe in the *Review* newspaper (1703–1713), was established by Steele and Addison in *The Tatler* (1709), *The Spectator* (1711), and *The Guardian* (1713). Among contributors were Berkeley, Pope, Tickell, Budgell, Hughes. Then came, under the editorship of Steele, *The Englishman*, *The Lover*, and *The Reader* ; while Addison, who had broken with

Steele, started *The Freeholder*. But none of these attained such a success as *The Spectator*. A generation later (1750-1752) Johnson carried on *The Rambler*, but he wanted the light and graceful touch of Addison, and his readers complained of his long words and his lack of variety. *The Adventurer* of John Hawkesworth (1752-1754) came next, with contributions from Johnson and Warton. Just after it came *The World* (1753-1756), edited by Edward Moore (author of *The Gamester*), with contributions from Horace Walpole and Lords Lyttelton and Chesterfield ; it was very successful. Alongside of it ran George Colman's weekly paper *The Connoisseur* (1754-1756), to which Cowper sent a few lively essays. *The Bee*, edited by Goldsmith, buzzed for six or seven weeks in 1759. Last of all the periodical essays came Johnson's second venture, *The Idler*, less gloomy and persistently moral than *The Rambler*, and enlivened with articles by Warton and Reynolds ; it ran from 1758 to 1760. The weeklies now began to be political, and monthly magazines, admitting essays along with other matter, became fashionable ; of these may be mentioned *The Monthly Review*, begun in 1749, and *The Critical Review*, founded by Smollett in 1756, both of which were long regarded as the leading magazines of their kind. Goldsmith contributed to the latter ; but his *Chinese Letters* enriched a daily, *The Public Ledger*, which commenced in 1760. The first number of *The London Times* appeared in 1788.

But the great institution of last century was the novel. The way was prepared for it by Bunyan's *Life and Death of Mr. Badman* (1680), and more especially by Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), and Swift's *Travels of Gulliver* (1726). It was not, however, till 1740 that the first English novel, properly so called, Richardson's

*Pamela*, made its appearance. It at once awoke a new interest in the reading public, and the novel was rapidly developed. Next in time, and at least equal in merit to Richardson, is the other great English novelist of last century, Henry Fielding, whose *Joseph Andrews* appeared in 1742. The Scottish novelist, Tobias Smollett, only inferior to Fielding in a tendency to caricature, was in the field in 1748 with *Roderick Random*; while the Irishmen, Sterne and Goldsmith, ably maintained the credit of their country, the former with *Tristram Shandy* (1759), and the latter with *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766).

It was so late as the middle of last century that history was written in English for the first time with literary grace. The great names here are Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon—the last the greatest historian England has yet produced.

A great body of theological and philosophical writing marks the history of the thought of the period: in the earlier part, divines were ranked on the side of Authority or Reason, according as they thought that the Bible or common-sense should be the supreme test of truth. The philosophers joined in the controversy. It employed the pens of Tillotson, Cudworth, Stillingfleet, Sherlock, South, Shaftesbury, Barrow, and Newton; Berkeley's whole system of Idealism was put forth in answer to the sceptics; Clarke and Butler wrote on the side of revealed religion—the latter, by his *Analogy*, seeking to reconcile reason and revelation; while Paley endeavored in his *Evidences* to defend Christianity from the standpoint of common-sense.

The poetry all through the period is marked by restraint of feeling and correctness of expression. There are few or no wild imaginative flights or passionate



utterances. A well-defined line marks off the verse of Dryden and his followers from that of the preceding age. The difference amounts to a contrast. It is all the difference between romance and conventional rule, between naturalness and artificiality. It is to be explained by the altered conditions, both political and social, of the times. The fervor of the emotional and imaginative Elizabethan era had cooled down under the restraining forces of Puritanism, which still affected a large area of the people after the Restoration; while there was nothing in the history of the country, till we come to the Napoleonic wars, to excite a spirit of heroic national feeling among those who were opposed to Puritanism. To correct and to teach were regarded as the highest offices of poetry; and satire and didactic verse continued to be written all through the period. The restraint in poetical feeling was accompanied by restraint in both the style and the form of its expression. The heroic couplet, introduced by Waller, established in the popular favor by Dryden, and perfected by Pope, was held to be the standard measure for poetry down to and even past the time of Goldsmith, who may be said to have given it its final touch of grace. Attempts which at last succeeded in widening the domain of poetry and varying its expression were made early in the eighteenth century. First Thomson, and afterwards Gray, made the attempt. The former, by the use of blank-verse in his *Winter*, in 1725, set the example to Cowper, and Cowper to Wordsworth. At the same time he called poetry out of the town into the country, and found in external nature subjects directly capable of inspiring poetical ideas. Gray, too, aided in widening the range of poetical observation, by including the imagery of external nature; but he used natural description only as

an ornament to his poetry, and never made it the main subject. Like Thomson, he avoided the heroic couplet, but he was not prepared to abandon rhyme, and sought variety of music in the elegiac stanza and various other lyrical measures. At exactly the same time that Thomson was creating once more the feeling for nature in England, Allan Ramsay was reviving it in Scotland. The return to nature went on till the time of Cowper and Burns, who, publishing within a year of each other, the former his *Task* in 1785, the latter his Kilmarnock poems in 1786, spread everywhere a love for rural poetry, and prepared the way for Wordsworth.

It was another than the Elizabethan drama that arose in England after the Restoration. The theatres had been shut under Puritan rule for nearly twenty years, and the art of play-writing had to be learned anew. French tastes in matters dramatic were fashionable at court. Rhyme was believed to be a fitting adjunct for tragedy, and for fourteen years—from 1664 to 1678—the experiment was tried, and finally abandoned. In spite of the efforts of Dryden, Otway, Addison, Young, and Thomson tragedy never attained to anything like the sublimity to which it towered in the Elizabethan age. Comedy, however, entered under Congreve and Farquhar upon a new career of wit and humor; unfortunately the undeniable wit and humor of the Orange comedy was licentious in the extreme. By-and-by a purer taste prevailed, due partly to Jeremy Collier's exposure of the immorality of the stage (1698), and partly to the growth of a higher tone in society, through the writings of Addison. The best remaining comedies after Farquhar, himself an Irishman, were written by Irishmen—Steele, Goldsmith, and Sheridan.

A notable feature of the literary life of the period

was its connection with politics and the public service. The statement is more especially true when said of the half-century succeeding the Revolution. Government was eager to secure the influence of the pen, and authors were eager to give it. Even writers like Thomson and Young, who had little natural turn for practical affairs, were ambitious of serving their country. From Dryden to Adam Smith there were few that were not engaged directly in political work, or that did not, at least, hold some post in the gift of the government of the day. The connection is more especially marked in the case of the prose writers. Defoe, Steele, Addison, Swift, Burke, Gibbon, were all more or less influential politicians. Addison, if only for a short time, occupied the high position of secretary of state. Others, such as Johnson, were content to make incursions into the political field on questions of current interest; or, like Hume, gave their services in diplomatic missions. But even the poets were not wholly disconnected from politics and political appointments. Prior maintained the dignity of an ambassador-in-chief; even Gay served on embassies; Congreve held various lucrative posts in the public service; Thomson was surveyor of the Leeward Islands. If Young was little recognized by any political party, it was not for lack of seeking recognition. Cowper, who, like Gray, was mentioned for the laureateship, at least enjoyed a government pension. Pope and Goldsmith were the only poets of prominent mark who went unrewarded by party; and Pope's religion disqualified him from holding a political appointment. Nor must we forget Burns, a humble officer of excise, who had boasted that he was the king's debtor "for neither pension, post, nor place."

Patronage was a great institution in the literary life

of the period. There were still aristocratic authors—the successors of such literary men of high rank as Lord Buckhurst, Lord Surrey, and Sir Philip Sidney; but the literary connection of such men as Lord Dorset and Lord Halifax, Lord Lyttelton and Lord Chesterfield, was rather with authors than authorship. Dryden and Prior, Thomson and Young, were firm believers in the shadow of a great name; but indeed the practice of dedicating was universal. It was thought to be as necessary for the success of a book to secure a patron as a publisher. The connection, whatever advantage it may have been to the individual author, was unworthy of the profession and degrading to the dignity of literature. The bond was happily broken by Goldsmith's Dedication to his brother, and Johnson's Letter to Lord Chesterfield. It was a novelty in literature when a poor poet found a patron in one poorer than himself; and Johnson's definition of a patron came upon the literary world like a revelation. "Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help?" The Letter bears date 1755. From that time forward authors began to look to the public for patronage, and to trust to their merits as their best recommendation.

The influence of France on English literature is noticeable all through the period. On the whole, it was one of taste and style rather than of ideas. It commenced in a perfectly natural way. France in the time of the English Commonwealth was the refuge of the exiled Royalists, and it was from France through Holland that monarchy was restored to England in 1660. The correct style of writing had indeed begun with Waller independently of French influence, but French influence was

altogether in favor of the development of that style. Traces of Corneille are visible in the pompous and somewhat bombastic tragedies of Dryden. The comic wit of Molière reappears in Congreve. From Voiture and La-fontaine, Prior and Gay caught the art which gives grace to the Occasional Poem and ease in the conduct of a tale. Pope learned something from the critical keenness of Boileau. Goldsmith was following the example of Montesquieu in writing his *Chinese Letters*; and Montesquieu's influence is discernible in the philosophical histories of Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon. Fielding, but especially Smollett, owed a good deal to Lesage; and Sterne was a disciple of the sentimental school of Rousseau. It was Quesnay's lamp that, as Carlyle says, kindled the lamp of Adam Smith. It must not be forgotten that English influence on French literature was not less marked. There was action and counteraction between the two countries, with this difference, that while French influence manifested itself mainly in form and style, English influence affected rather ideas and the matter of thought.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF THE PRINCIPAL AUTHORS

##### I. *Poets*.—DRYDEN, POPE, THOMSON, GRAY, COWPER, and BURNS.

*Next after these as worthy of note, but of unequal merit, come—*WALLER, BUTLER, DENHAM, COWLEY, MARVELL, PRIOR, PARNELL, YOUNG, RAMSAY, GAY, COLLINS, GOLDSMITH, CRABBE, BLAKE.

##### II. *Dramatists*.—OTWAY, CONGREVE, and FARQUHAR.

*Other famous dramatists of the period include—*DRYDEN, WYCHERLEY, VANBRUGH, GOLDSMITH, SHERIDAN.

##### III. *Essayists and Critics*.—STEELE, ADDISON, JOHNSON, GOLDSMITH, and BURKE.

*To these add—*COWLEY, TEMPLE, DRYDEN, BENTLEY, ARBUTHNOT, SWIFT.

IV. *Novelists and Narrative Writers.*—DEFOE, SWIFT, RICHARDSON, FIELDING, STERNE, and SMOLLETT.

*Other well-known names in this department are*—ADDISON, JOHNSON, GOLDSMITH, and FANNY BURNEY.

V. *Historians and Biographers.*—BURNET, HUME, ROBERTSON, GIBBON, and BOSWELL.

*To these add*—EVELYN, PEPYS, MIDDLETON, SMOLLETT, GOLDSMITH, ROSCOE, and MITFORD.

VI. *Religious and Philosophical Writers.*—BUNYAN, LOCKE, BERKELEY, and ADAM SMITH.

*Other famous or popular authors of this class include*—BAXTER, CUDWORTH, ROBERT BOYLE, BARROW, TILLOTSON, SOUTH, NEWTON, LORD SHAFTESBURY, WATTS, CLARKE, BUTLER, HUTCHESON, WESLEY, REID, HUME, PRIESTLEY, PALEY.

Living into this period (1660–1789), but belonging in cast of genius, or quality of style, or in historical position, rather to the preceding period, were : George Wither, Robert Herrick, James Shirley, Thomas Hobbes, Izaak Walton, Sir Thomas Browne, Edward Hyde (Lord Clarendon), John Milton, and Jeremy Taylor.

## POETS

The poets laureate of the period—take them all in all—are by no means representative of their class. With one notable exception, Dryden, they might almost be characterized as a race of nobodies. Personal influence, and court favor or caprice, rather than poetical merit, too often secured the appointment, till the office was no longer regarded as honorable, and not seldom went a-begging for an occupant, down even to the time of Sir Walter Scott. Here is the list :

### POETS LAUREATE OF THE PERIOD, 1660–1789

|                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Sir William Davenant . . .  | Laureate from 1637 to 1668 |
| John Dryden . . . . .       | “ “ 1668 “ 1688            |
| Thomas Shadwell . . . . .   | “ “ 1688 “ 1692            |
| Nahum Tate . . . . .        | “ “ 1692 “ 1715            |
| Nicholas Rowe . . . . .     | “ “ 1715 “ 1718            |
| Laurence Eusden . . . . .   | “ “ 1718 “ 1730            |
| Colley Cibber . . . . .     | “ “ 1730 “ 1757            |
| William Whitehead . . . . . | “ “ 1757 “ 1788            |
| Thomas Warton . . . . .     | “ “ 1788 “ 1790            |



Davenant succeeded Ben Jonson, to whom, in 1630, letters-patent of the office were first granted, the salary being fixed at £100 and a tierce of canary (one-third of a pipe, or 40 gallons) per annum. The only duty attaching to the office was the composition of a birthday ode for the king, or the celebration in verse of some national victory. In the next period, when Southey became laureate, the gift of wine was commuted into a payment of £27, and the birthday ode, having become a cuckoo song, was abandoned. The office is now, therefore, more a sinecure than ever.

The great English poet between Milton and Pope, **John Dryden** (1631-1700), was born of a good family at Aldwinkle, in Northamptonshire. He was educated at Westminster School, and Trinity College, Cambridge. Nineteen when he entered the University, he remained there for seven years without distinguishing himself further than by taking his B.A. degree in the ordinary course. He would seem, however, to have been a careful student of current politics, and to have had a leaning to the side of the Commonwealth party in the violent dissensions of the times. It may have been because it was the triumphant party, for on the restoration of monarchy he became an enthusiastic Royalist.

The death of his father, while he was still at Cambridge, left him the possessor of but a modest independency, and he ventured upon a literary career. The shortest and surest road to fortune and fame was through the theatre, and therefore, and for no other reason—for his instincts by no means lay in that direction—he set out on the journey with the vigor which characterized all he did. He was then thirty-two years of age, and he continued to turn out plays to order for the next eighteen years. He had engaged to supply the company of players at the King's House with a series of original dramas or adaptations at a fixed rate; and there can be no doubt that his work for the theatre was for all those years a great, and indeed the main, source of his income. Not much more can be said of his dramas than that

they suited the times and were popular. But the times were vicious, and he pandered to the public taste.

He married the same year in which he began to write plays, and the match he made, if not a happy one, was at least brilliant, and brought him the advantage of aristocratic society. His wife was Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of the Earl of Berkshire. About the middle of his career as a playwright he conjoined the offices of poet laureate and historiographer royal, worth £200 a year, and several years later received in succession a pension from the king and a good appointment in the customs. His yearly income then could not have been equivalent to less than £3000 of modern money.

At the age of fifty he turned to satire, a species of composition for which he was naturally fitted, and to which the political situation seemed to invite him. He took the side of the king and the Duke of York against the friends of the Protestant succession and their leader, the Earl of Shaftesbury. When the Duke of York came to the throne in 1685, Dryden was continued in his offices, and became a Roman Catholic. Misfortune overtook him at the Revolution; he was stripped of his offices—the laureateship, to his intense disgust, being given to his personal enemy, the despised Shadwell. He tried to restore his fortunes by recommencing to write for the stage, but the attempt was unsuccessful; he did better at translating Juvenal, Ovid, Horace, Homer, and, more especially, the whole of Virgil—the last bringing him £1200. He was now independent of the pecuniary aid which Lord Dorset generously offered him. The last twelve years of his life were the busiest. His powers of varied versification seemed to be still developing; and he was in the midst of a commission to produce ten thousand lines of verse for Tonson the publisher, when, physically worn out but mentally as energetic as ever, death overtook him near the close of his sixty-ninth year. He was honored with a public funeral and interment in Westminster Abbey.

Dryden's literary career opened with three panegyrics—the first, in 1659, in praise of "His Highness Oliver, Lord

Protector;" the next two, in 1660 and 1661 respectively, *Astræa Redux*, and a poem on the coronation, in praise of "His Sacred Majesty, Charles the Second." These and *Annus Mirabilis*, the Year of Wonders, written in 1666 on the subject of the Dutch war and the Great Fire, constitute the first division of his works. They show the formation of his style on the models of Davenant and Waller.

The second division of his works consists of his dramas, some twenty-two in all, beginning in 1663 with *The Wild Gallant*, and including as his best, or at least his most popular efforts of this kind, *The Conquest of Granada* and *All for Love*. *All for Love* appeared in 1678, and was regarded by himself as his dramatic masterpiece; it invites comparison with Shakespeare's treatment of the same subject in *Antony and Cleopatra*. At first Dryden wrote his dramas in rhyme, following the French fashion, and defended his practice on the plea that rhyme, "which most regulates the fancy, and gives the judgment its busiest employment, is like to bring forth the richest and clearest thoughts." Later he abandoned his position, and returned to blank-verse in *All for Love*. Scott more than hints that Dryden wasted the best years of his life, and prostituted his great powers—more worthily employed on a cherished scheme of an epic on King Arthur—in the composition of plays vicious in both morals and art, but seeks to put the blame less on the poet than on his patrons:

"Dryden in immortal strain  
Had raised the Table Round again,  
But that a ribald king and court  
Bade him toil on to make them sport, . . .  
The world defrauded of the high design,  
Profaned the God-given strength, and marred the lofty line."

The third division of Dryden's works includes his three great satires—*Absalom and Achitophel*, the first part in 1681, the second in 1682; and *The Medal* and *Macflecknoe*, both in 1682. These are correlated, and had their origin in the political differences of the day. The first is an attack upon

the Earl of Shaftesbury under the name of Achitophel, represented as counselling Absalom, the young Duke of Monmouth, into impious hostility against his father. Shaftesbury was tried for treason, and acquitted, whereupon his friends expressed their delight by striking a medal with the motto *Lætamur*. The incident furnished Dryden with the subject of his second satire. His enemies put forward Shadwell to reply, and this man's infamous attack upon Dryden provoked the rejoinder which dubbed Shadwell "Macflecknoe," after a scribbling Irish priest, and forever demolished his reputation.

The fourth division of Dryden's works comprises two poems on religious subjects. The one, *Religio Laici*, or a Layman's Faith, published in 1682, seems to have been suggested by the Popish plot, and is a defence of the Church of England; the other, the allegory of *The Hind and the Panther*, published in 1687, marks Dryden's conversion to Roman Catholicism, and is a defence of the Catholic Church. A milk-white hind represents the Church of Rome, and the Church of England now figures as a creature of the spotted kind.

The fifth division of Dryden's poetical work represents the extreme and varied activity of the last ten years of his life. It includes fragmentary translations of Greek and Latin poetry, notably a complete version of Virgil; paraphrases of tales from Boccaccio and Chaucer, commonly known as *The Fables*; and a sublime ode on the power of music, called *Alexander's Feast*. His Virgil and the Ode appeared in 1697; *The Fables* in 1700, the year of his death. Dryden's most enduring and perfect work is seen in his Satires, the Ode, and *The Fables*.

The chief quality of Dryden's style is vigor. Gray well describes it as a car borne wide over the fields of glory by

"Two coursers of ethereal race

With necks in thunder clothed and long-resounding pace."

From Waller's hands Dryden received the heroic couplet, and established upon it the classical school of English verse

which Pope developed, and to which Goldsmith contributed the latest graces. The great want of Dryden's poetry is romance. He has the beauties of form and color, but his flower wants fragrance.

Dryden's prose style has the best qualities of his verse. He is never dull or obscure or undecided. There is no pedantry in his strong, clear, idiomatic sentences. It is chiefly as a critic that he writes in prose, and his writings take the form, for the most part, of Prefaces, or Dedications. Excellent specimens of his prose style are his *Essay on Heroic Plays*, prefixed to *The Conquest of Granada*; his Dedication, prefixed to *Aureng-Zebe*; his Preface to *All for Love*; and his Preface to *The Fables*. But best known of all is the *Essay on Dramatic Poesy*, in the form of a conversation between four friends, of whom the poet is one. It was published separately in 1667.

“Of these the false Achitophel was first,  
 A name to all succeeding ages curst:  
 For close designs and crooked counsels fit,  
 Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit,  
 Restless, unfixed in principles and place,  
 In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace:  
 A fiery soul, which, working out its way,  
 Fretted the pigmy body to decay  
 And o'er-informed the tenement of clay.  
 A daring pilot in extremity,  
 Pleased with the danger, when the waves went high,  
 He sought the storms; but, for a calm unfit,  
 Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.  
 Great wits are sure to madness near allied,  
 And thin partitions do their bounds divide;  
 Else, why should he, with wealth and honour blest,  
 Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?  
 Punish a body which he could not please,  
 Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?”

A man so various that he<sup>1</sup> seemed to be  
 Not one, but all mankind's epitome:  
 Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,  
 Was everything by starts and nothing long;

<sup>1</sup> *Zimri*

But in the course of one revolving moon  
Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon."

—*Absalom and Achitophel.*

"Dim as the borrowed beams of moon and stars  
To lonely, weary, wandering travellers  
Is Reason to the soul; and as on high  
These rolling fires discover but the sky,  
Not light us here, so Reason's glimmering ray  
Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,  
But guide us upward to a better day.  
And as those nightly tapers disappear  
When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere,  
So pale grows Reason at Religion's sight,  
So dies, and so dissolves in supernatural light."

—*Religio Laici.*

"A milk-white Hind, immortal and unchanged,  
Fed on the lawns and in the forest ranged;  
Without unspotted, innocent within,  
She feared no danger, for she knew no sin.  
Yet had she oft been chased with horns and hounds  
And Scythian shafts; and many wingéd wounds  
Aimed at her heart; was often forced to fly,  
And doomed to death, though fated not to die. . . .  
Panting and pensive now she ranged alone,  
And wandered in the kingdoms once her own.  
The common hunt, though from their rage restrained  
By sovereign power, her company disdained,  
Grinned as they passed, and with a glaring eye  
Gave gloomy signs of secret enmity.  
'Tis true she bounded by and tripped so light,  
They had not time to take a steady sight;  
For truth has such a face and such a mien  
As to be loved needs only to be seen."

—*The Hind and the Panther.*

"Three poets, in distant ages born,  
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.  
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed,  
The next in majesty, in both the last:  
The force of Nature could no further go;  
To make a third she joined the former two."

—*On Milton.*



The literary successor of Dryden, **Alexander Pope** (1688-1744), was born in Lombard Street, London. He was the son of Catholic parents; his father a successful merchant in the linen trade, his mother (Edith Turner) of a good Yorkshire family. Shortly after his birth his father withdrew from business to the privacy of a small estate he had purchased at Binfield, about nine miles from the town of Windsor, and on the border of Windsor Forest. Hither, after some desultory schooling, latterly in London, Pope came home for good at the age of twelve; and here he resided with his parents, reading, writing, and visiting at his own sweet will, till the year 1716. Before that date he had made his mark in literature.

Pope's religious creed barred him from the learned professions. For the active life of a business man he had no desire, neither had nature given him physical fitness for it—for, besides being of dwarfish size, he was deformed, weak, and constantly ailing. There remained, as the only outlet for a genius indefatigably active, the career of a literary man or an artist; and to literature, after an inquiring glance at painting, he gave himself up with entire devotion. His literary career is the history of his life. His father, whose indulgence the son never abused, left him free to make his own choice. A brief interview in his twelfth year with Dryden is supposed to have determined Pope to poetry; but there is no doubt that the advice of Walsh, the critic, "to aim at a correct style," pointed out to him the particular walk of poetry by following which he early came to fame. Pope "lisp'd in numbers." Before he was sixteen he had written several thousands of lines, most of which he had the good sense to destroy, sparing, however, a translation of the first book of *The Thebaid* of Statius, and *The Pastorals*, to attest the early maturity and astonishing correctness and ease of his style. *The Pastorals* were not published till 1709, the year in which he wrote his *Essay on Criticism*, a didactic poem on the laws and history of literary taste. The *Essay* was published in 1711, and at once brought Pope's name into prominent public notice. Next year the publica-

tion of *The Rape of the Lock* established his fame as the foremost poet of the day. The object of the poem was to reconcile a lady to her lover. The lady, Miss Arabella Fermor, belonged to one of the Oxfordshire families with which Pope was acquainted; and the offence of her lover, Lord Petre, was the theft of a lock of her hair as she was drinking coffee at a card-party at Hampton. The poem is a brilliant mock-heroic in three cantos, is the most original of all Pope's poems, and is properly to be regarded as an epic of fashionable life of the time of Queen Anne.

Pope's growing fame had now brought round him many friends, of whom the most notable in literature were Gay and Addison; to these the publication of *Windsor Forest* in 1713 added the important name of Swift. Under the presidency of Swift—punningly designated Martinus Scribblers—a club was shortly formed by Pope and his friends for the purpose of warning off incompetent writers from the field of literature. Pope's great service to literature as a member of this club was to come some fourteen years later; meanwhile, with the publication in 1714 of *The Temple of Fame*, a paraphrase from Chaucer, the first stage of Pope's career ended, and he next addressed himself to the mighty task of rendering Homer into English couplets. The first part of his translation of *The Iliad* appeared in 1715, and the last in 1720. Then came *The Odyssey*, in which he was assisted by two Cambridge scholars, Fenton and Broome—the first part appearing in 1723, and the last in 1725. For the work of his ten years of absorption in Homer, Pope received about as many thousands of pounds. It made him independent. The translation of Homer does not, however, represent the whole work of the second stage of Pope's life; an edition of Shakespeare, of no great merit it is true, and two impassioned poems of great power—an *Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady*, and the *Epistle of Eloisa to Abelard*—belong to the same period. Meanwhile, in the spring of 1716, the Popes had left Binfield to settle at Chiswick, below Kew, on the left bank of the Thames; here the elder Pope died, and in the spring of

1718 the poet left Chiswick, and settled with his mother at Twickenham. Twickenham is identified with the last twenty-six years—almost the half—of Pope's life. Here in a modest villa on a bank of the Thames he enjoyed fame and fortune, received friends and admirers, and was as happy as his temperament and his enemies would permit him to be. The grounds that went with the villa extended to five acres; Pope had a taste for horticulture, which he inherited from his father, and he took great delight in laying out his five acres according to a plan of his own, contriving to find room for a shell-temple and a garden-house, a bowling-green and a grove, an orangery, and even a wilderness with miniature mountains, besides a vinery and a plot for pot-herbs. Part of the grounds was separated from the house by the public road, but Pope maintained his privacy by tunnelling under the turnpike—converting the tunnel into a grotto, which he adorned with a fountain, and crystals, shells, and natural curiosities of whatever kind.

Before he left Binfield he had quarrelled with Addison, who had injudiciously, if not unjustly, praised Tickell as the best translator of Homer. At Chiswick he fell out with Cibber on a small point that touched his literary vanity. At Twickenham commenced his inglorious feud with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Yet Pope could be a constant friend. His attachment to his parents is beyond praise; and his friendly relations with Gay and Swift remained unbroken to the end. It was at Twickenham that Pope entered, in 1727-1728, on the third stage of his career as a man of letters. It was now that he wrote his satirical and philosophical poems. His great satire, *The Dunciad*, was the outcome of his connection with the Scribblers Club; and Swift had actually proposed to him a satire on the subject "The Progress of Dulness," on the lines of Dryden's *Macflecknoe*. As soon as Pope was free of Homer he was ready to scourge the dunces, and, looking around for a hero of Dulness, pitched upon Lewis Theobald (who had attacked his edition of Shakespeare) as well suited to be the Macflecknoe of his day. Over a hundred persons

are named in *The Dunciad*, the great majority of them names now and nothing more; but the poem is something nobler than a satire of mere personal abuse, however well deserved, and the names may stand as counters, typifying to each generation in turn the various phases of its own literary stupidity. The first *Dunciad* appeared in 1728; a superfluous fourth book was added in 1742, with the unfortunate substitution of Cibber instead of Theobald as hero. Of his philosophical poems, his *Essay on Man*, in four epistles, published 1732–1734, is the best known; it is a brilliant statement of the commonplace philosophy of Lord Bolingbroke, a sophist and man of the world, for whom Pope had a strange veneration. The *Moral Essays*, in five epistles, published 1732–1735, exhibit Pope's skill in the satire of characters; and the satires in imitation of Horace (1733–1737), notably the famous *Epistle to Mr. Arbuthnot* which forms their Prologue, continue what the *Moral Essays* began, with even more pungency and sprightliness. Pope's last days of pain and weakness were cheered by the kind ministrations of Martha Blount, one of two sisters of about his own age, for whom he cherished an affectionate regard almost from boyhood. To her he left the most of his personal property.

Pope made the heroic couplet his own peculiar measure, and he scarcely used any other. While wanting the vigor and sweep of Dryden, he shows superior finish of diction, an easier and nimbler movement of verse, and more sustained brilliancy of wit. He had no faculty for lyrical or dramatic writing, and the bouquet of romance is almost entirely absent even from his best poetry. But there is no obscurity in Pope; his ideas are clear, and expressed with a clearness and brevity that reach perfection. No poet save Shakespeare is oftener quoted—not for the originality of his thought, but for the proverb-like quality of his language.

“Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,  
Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those.  
Favours to none, to all she smiles extends.  
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.

Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike ;  
 And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.  
 Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,  
 Might hide her faults, if belles had faults to hide.  
 If to her share some female errors fall,  
 Look on her face, and you'll forget them all."

—*Rape of the Lock* (Belinda).

"By foreign hands thy dying eyes were closed;  
 By foreign hands thy decent limbs composed;  
 By foreign hands thy humble grave adorned;  
 By strangers honoured, and by strangers mourned.  
 What though no friends in sable weeds appear,  
 Grieve for an hour, perhaps, then mourn a year,  
 And bear about the mockery of woe  
 To midnight dances and the public show !  
 What though no weeping loves thy ashes grace,  
 Nor polished marble emulate thy face !  
 What though no sacred earth allow thee room,  
 Nor hallowed dirge be muttered o'er thy tomb !  
 Yet shall thy grave with rising flowers be dressed,  
 And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast.  
 There shall the morn her earliest tears bestow,  
 There the first roses of the year shall blow ;  
 While angels with their silver wings o'ershade  
 The ground now sacred by thy relics made.  
 So, peaceful rests, without a stone, a name,  
 What once had beauty, titles, wealth, and fame.  
 How loved, how honoured once, avails thee not,  
 To whom related, or by whom begot.  
 A heap of dust alone remains of thee—  
 'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be."

—*Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady.*

"Peace to all such ! but were there one whose fires  
 True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires ;  
 Blessed with each talent and each art to please,  
 And born to write, converse, and live with ease ;  
 Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,  
 Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne ;  
 View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,  
 And hate for arts that caused himself to rise ;  
 Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,  
 And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer ;  
 Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike ;  
 Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike ;

Alike reserved to blame or to commend,  
 A timorous foe, and a suspicious friend ;  
 Dreading e'en fools, by flatterers besieged,  
 And so obliging that he ne'er obliged ;  
 Like Cato, give his little senate laws,  
 And sit attentive to his own applause ;  
 While wits and templars every sentence raise,  
 And wonder with a foolish face of praise :  
 Who but must laugh, if such a man there be ?  
 Who would not weep, if Atticus were he ?"

—*Prologue to the Satires.*

Both Dryden and Pope had found their proper vocation as poets in the study of man. It was reserved for a Scottish writer to bring back again into the domain of English poetry, but more directly than ever, the study of external nature. **James Thomson** (1700–1748) was born in the manse of Ednam, in Roxburghshire. His father, the minister of the parish, belonged to a family of gardeners; but on his mother's side the poet traced his descent from the ancient Border family of Home. Only a few weeks after his birth his father removed to the living of Southdean in the same county, and here the boyhood of the future poet was passed, in a district associated with Chevy Chase, under the shadow of the pastoral Cheviots. In his twelfth year he began to attend the grammar-school at Jedburgh, where he read Virgil, who was to be ever afterwards his favorite poet. The charm of Virgil's descriptions, the sylvan scenery of Jed vale, and the encouragement of Robert Riccaltoun, a young college-bred farmer of the neighborhood, made Thomson a poet while he was yet a school-boy. But few of his juvenile verses escaped the holocaust to which he had the good sense to doom them at the close of every year.

At the beginning of his sixteenth year he was sent to Edinburgh University, the design of his parents being to educate him for the Scottish Church; but he had not been a student many months when his father suddenly died, and his mother, with the rest of her children, came to live in Edinburgh. Though the city was now his home, he still



kept up, by frequent visits in vacation-time, a cherished connection with his native Teviotdale. At college he showed a preference for the study of natural philosophy, and widened his acquaintance with the classics. English poetry, especially as represented by Milton and Dryden, was a private study, and he still carried on the practice of versifying, chiefly on rural subjects. Some of his early verses, contributed to a local Miscellany, such as the lines *On a Country Life*, and the lines *On Happiness*, are written in the heroic measure, and contain several ideas and images which afterwards reappeared in *The Seasons* and *The Castle of Indolence*. In 1720 Thomson was a student of divinity; but the subject, as it was then taught at Edinburgh, does not seem to have been congenial to him. Still he persevered, until, in the last year of his course, the condemnation by his professor of an exercise on one of the Psalms drove his mind from divinity and changed the course of his life. The exercise was condemned for its floridity of style. Thomson suddenly resolved to seek his fortunes in London. What his plans precisely were cannot be known from his correspondence, but there is room for the inference that they combined some literary design with the hope of obtaining, through the influence of his mother's family relations, some post in the political service of the government. He had reached the middle point of his life when he formed this resolution—he was now twenty-four. March, 1725, found him in London, and from that date onward he was to be in England or in English society.

His first experience of London was the theft, by a pick-pocket, of his letters of introduction. Next came the news of his mother's death. He had as yet written nothing worthy of being printed. The friends upon whose influence he had relied could give him no assistance except a humble tutorship in the family of Lord Binning, at East Barnet, near London; and here—thrown unexpectedly upon his own resources—he began in gloom his famous poem on *Winter*. He finished it in the winter months of his first year in England, and it was published in the following March, exactly

one year from the time of his arrival in London. He got only three guineas for it; but it was a success from the first, and the unexpected commencement of a new era in the history of English poetry. A second edition was called for in June, and five editions had been issued by 1728. It was like a breath of fresh country air to dwellers in a crowded city. The critics praised it, and Thomson found himself surrounded by friends. Its success acted like a spur to his industry. He gave up his tutorship, and wrote in succession poems of *Summer*, *Spring*, and *Autumn*. In 1730 the collected *Seasons* appeared; his first tragedy, *Sophonisba*, was produced at Drury Lane in the same year; and he then set out on a tour through France and Italy with young Charles Talbot, the son of the future lord chancellor. He was absent from England about two years.

On his return he was appointed secretary of briefs in the Court of Chancery, and set about the composition of a poem on *Liberty*, which he designed for his masterpiece. It is a blank-verse poem in five parts, and came out in three instalments in 1734–35–36. It was even then a failure, and has never been read since. Thomson now settled in a garden-house in Kew-foot Lane, Richmond, where he passed the rest of his life in easy circumstances. Among his many friends were the poets Pope, Shenstone, Collins, and Armstrong; most intimate of all was Mr., afterwards Lord, Lyttelton, at whose seat of Hagley Park, in Worcestershire, Thomson was a welcome visitor. A remarkable feature of Thomson's character was the constancy of his friendships. He was the most amiable and genial of men, cheerful in solitude, yet not averse to society. On the loss of his secretaryship, consequent on the death of Lord Chancellor Talbot, he was pensioned by the Prince of Wales, and renewed his efforts at dramatic composition. *Agamemnon* was produced in 1738; *Edward and Eleanora* was ready in 1739; and in 1740 he wrote, conjointly with Mallet, *The Masque of Alfred*—memorable only for the lyric *Rule Britannia*, the work of Thomson. In 1744, through Lyttelton's influence, he was appointed surveyor-general of the

Leeward Islands, an office which yielded him about £300 a year after paying a deputy to do the work. Meanwhile he had been for many years leisurely engaged upon *The Castle of Indolence*, a poem which had its origin in the banter of his friends, who remonstrated with him on the growth of his laziness. It is an apology for his own indulgence in indolence, and a warning against the indulgence of it in others. It was published in the early summer of 1748; three months later Thomson died of a neglected cold, caught on the Thames. He left behind him the tragedy of *Coriolanus*, which was produced in the following year.

Thomson wrote little in the heroic couplet at a time when the heroic couplet was the popular measure of poetry. The works upon which his fame rests are *The Seasons* and *The Castle of Indolence*—the former and more popular in blank-verse, the latter and more exquisite in the Spenserian stanza. He was the first to show how well blank-verse suited poetical descriptions of nature. In this respect he set the example to Cowper and Wordsworth. His style is copious even to redundancy, but always suggestive and inspiring. It is only in the reflective passages that he becomes pompously prolix; when nature is the theme, whether it be a snow-storm on the Cheviots or a redbreast at the window, it is astonishing with what felicity of language he brings the scene to our eyes.

Thomson's great service to literature lay in extending the domain of poetry by making the scenes and varying aspects of external nature themes for poetical treatment. Nature had been often described before, but only incidentally and in a manner subservient to the main interest—Man. Thomson made Nature directly his subject: it was the grand and central interest of his poetry; and he delineated it with an exactness of portraiture never shown before, and with a romantic charm of coloring that attracted many followers. Johnson describes him as "looking round on Nature and on Life with the eye of a poet, the eye which distinguishes in everything presented to its view whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained." His influ-

ence was at once and widely felt, and is still active in English poetry. The impetus he gave to the study of nature was continued by Cowper and Wordsworth, Keats and Byron. The wholesome moral tendency of his poetry is not the least of his merits. He left "no line which, dying, he could wish to blot."

"But should you lure  
From his dark haunt, beneath the tangled roots  
Of pendent trees, the monarch of the brook,  
Behooves you then to ply your finest art.  
Long time he, following cautious, scans the fly;  
And oft attempts to seize it, but as oft  
The dimpled water speaks his jealous fear.  
At last, while haply o'er the shaded sun  
Passes a cloud, he desperate takes the death  
With sullen plunge. At once he darts along,  
Deep struck, and runs out all the lengthened line;  
Then seeks the farthest ooze, the sheltering weed,  
The caverned bank, his old secure abode;  
And flies aloft, and flounces round the pool,  
Indignant of the guile. With yielding hand,  
That feels him still, yet to his furious course  
Gives way, you, now retiring, following now  
Across the stream, exhaust his idle rage:  
Till floating broad upon his breathless side,  
And to his fate abandoned, to the shore  
You gayly drag your unresisting prize."

—*Spring.*

"The meek-eyed Morn appears, mother of dews,  
At first faint gleaming in the dappled east;  
Till far o'er ether spreads the widening glow;  
And, from before the lustre of her face,  
White break the clouds away. With quickened step  
Brown Night retires; young Day pours in apace,  
And opens all the lawny prospect wide.  
The dripping rock, the mountain's misty top  
Swell on the sight, and brighten with the dawn.  
Blue, through the dusk, the smoking currents shine;  
And from the bladed field the fearful hare  
Limps awkward; while along the forest glade  
The wild deer trip, and, often turning, gaze  
At early passenger."

—*Summer.*



“One alone,  
 The redbreast, sacred to the household gods,  
 Wisely regardful of the embroiling sky,  
 In joyless fields and thorny thickets, leaves  
 His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man  
 His annual visit. Half afraid, he first  
 Against the window beats ; then, brisk, alights  
 On the warm hearth ; then, hopping o’er the floor,  
 Eyes all the smiling family askance,  
 And pecks and starts, and wonders where he is :  
 Till, more familiar grown, the table crumbs  
 Attract his slender feet.”

—*Winter.*

“A pleasing land of drowsy-head it was ;  
 Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye ;  
 And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,  
 Forever flushing round a summer sky.  
 There eke the soft delights, that witchingly  
 Instil a wanton sweetness through the breast,  
 And the calm pleasures, always hovered nigh ;  
 But whate’er smackt of noyance, or unrest,  
 Was far, far off expelled from this delicious nest.

“Near the pavilions where we slept, still ran  
 Soft-tinkling streams, and dashing waters fell,  
 And sobbing breezes sighed, and oft began  
 (So worked the wizard) wintry storms to swell,  
 As heaven and earth they would together mell<sup>1</sup>: <sup>1</sup>*mingle*  
 At doors and windows, threatening, seemed to call  
 The demons of the tempest, growling fell,  
 Yet the least entrance found they none at all ;  
 Whence sweeter grew our sleep, secure in massy hall.”

—*The Castle of Indolence.*

“Supported on his shortened arm he leans,  
 Prone, agonizing ; with incumbent fate  
 Heavy declines his head ; yet dark beneath  
 The suffering feature sullen vengeance lowers,  
 Shame, indignation, unaccomplished rage :  
 And the cheated eye expects his fall.”

—*Liberty* (The Gladiator).

“As those we love decay, we die in part,  
 String after string is severed from the heart ;

Till loosened life, at last, but breathing clay,  
 Without one pang, is glad to fall away.  
 Unhappy he who latest feels the blow,  
 Whose eyes have wept o'er every friend laid low,  
 Dragged lingering on from partial death to death,  
 Till, dying, all he can resign is breath."

—*On the Death of Mr. Aikman.*

"To thee belongs the rural reign;  
 Thy cities shall with commerce shine;  
 All thine shall be the subject main,  
 And every shore it circles thine.  
 Rule Britannia, Britannia rules the waves!  
 Britons never shall be slaves.

"The muses, still with freedom found,  
 Shall to thy happy coast repair;  
 Blest isle, with matchless beauty crowned,  
 And manly hearts to guard the fair.  
 Rule Britannia, Britannia rules the waves!  
 Britons never shall be slaves."

—*Alfred: a Masque.*

No English poet has built for himself so durable a monument on a foundation so narrow as **Thomas Gray** (1716–1771). This consummate artist in verse was a Londoner by birth, the fifth of a family of twelve children born to Philip Gray and his wife Dorothy Antrobus. His father, a scrivener in good circumstances, was a man of an ill-regulated temper bordering on insanity. It was to his mother that the poet was indebted for his maintenance, education, and every home comfort that he knew. She died when he was thirty-three, and he then inscribed his obligations and affection on her tombstone in the words—"Here sleep the remains of Dorothy Gray, widow, the careful, tender mother of many children, one of whom alone had the misfortune to survive her." Even after her marriage his mother, in partnership with an elder sister, carried on business as a milliner, and it was from the profits of this business that Gray received his schooling—his father refusing to educate him. He was sent to Eton in his eleventh year, where he was fort-



unate to be under the care of two of his mother's brothers, then assistant masters at that famous college. Gray was seven years at Eton, and became an excellent scholar, and even a moralist, as some of his Latin verses of this period which have been preserved well testify. He seems to have been a shy and studious lad, averse to the rougher sports of healthy boyhood, and intimate with only a few of his youthful companions. Among these were Horace Walpole, son of the Prime Minister, and Richard West, a grandson of Burnet the historian, weakly boys of about the same age as Gray.

In 1734 Gray went to Cambridge, whither Walpole soon followed; and there he remained, a student of Peterhouse, till 1738. Classical learning was at that time in a depraved state at Cambridge; for mathematics Gray, whose bent was all to classical learning, had no taste whatever; and he was sufficiently melancholy among his fellow-students, whom he described as "a pretty collection of desolate animals." His vacations he passed at his uncle's in Buckinghamshire, where he was indolently happy with Virgil among the Burnham beeches. He now began to write English verse, precluding on the heroic couplet, with Dryden for his model, and trying his hand, like Pope before him, at a version of part of *The Thebaid* of Statius.

In the spring of 1739 he set out, on the invitation of Walpole, on a tour on the Continent. He was absent from England for two years and a half. The friends visited France, Switzerland, and Italy, climbed to the Grande Chartreuse, and saw most of the cities of Southern Europe. It was the happiest part of Gray's life. "In our little journey up to the Grande Chartreuse," he wrote to West, "I do not remember to have gone ten paces without an exclamation that there was no restraining; not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry." Unfortunately they quarrelled, near Bologna, and came home singly and by separate routes in the autumn of 1741, the one ten days behind the other. Walpole was the offender, and the offence is said to have been his opening one of Gray's letters. Three years later the quarrel was made up.

Shortly after his return to England, Gray's father died of gout, and his mother, retiring from business, went to live with her sisters at Stoke-Pogis in Buckingham, a small village about four miles north of Eton. Here Gray, after a brief futile attempt to begin the study of law, the profession for which he was intended, entered upon his literary career with a freshness and activity for which his long holiday of travel had prepared him. The year 1742 is memorable for three odes—*On the Spring*, *On a Distant Prospect of Eton College*, and *To Adversity*; for a beautiful *Sonnet on the Death of West* (an event which happened in June); and for the design and partial execution of the immortal *Elegy*. After this sudden and brilliant outburst, Gray relapsed into silence for five years. He had gone back to Cambridge in the winter of 1742, that he might not be a burden on the slender fortune of his mother and her two sisters at Stoke; and having taken the degree of LL.B. in 1744, was installed as a resident at Peterhouse. The rest of his life centred round Cambridge, and was only varied externally by regular summer visits to Stoke, an occasional trip to London, and expeditions to the more picturesque parts of England, such as the Lake Country and the Vale of Wye, and the Scottish Highlands. A melancholy, which did not overwhelm him, but which seldom lifted, fell upon his spirits, and his ordinary refuge from its gloom was the classics. He became a studious recluse, and "perhaps the most learned man in Europe." In 1747 he wrote the mock-heroic *Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat*. A more important work was the completion of *The Elegy in a Country Churchyard* in 1750. His Pindaric Odes (properly so called), *The Progress of Poesy*, and *The Bard* were the work of 1754–1757. These were published in 1757 at Walpole's private press at Strawberry Hill, and were at once successful. It was these, and not the *Ode on Eton College*—which, indeed, attracted no attention on its first appearance—nor even the *Elegy*, which made Gray to be regarded as the foremost poet of his day. He was offered, but declined, the laureateship. It was in 1764 that Gray paid his first visit to Lowland Scotland;

next year, when the hills were aglow with blooming heather, he penetrated to the Highlands, and was enraptured with the scenery. In 1768 he received the honorary appointment (worth, however, £400 a year) of the Professorship of Modern History at Cambridge; and in 1769 made his famous tour among the English lakes, noting his impressions the while in a journal, which shows how nearly he anticipated the Wordsworthian delight in external nature. His last expedition was in a boat on the Wye, which he descended for forty miles, past Tintern Abbey and "a succession of nameless wonders." He died in 1771 in Pembroke College, to which he had removed from Peterhouse on account of an affront to his dignity some sixteen years before. Wordsworth was born the year before Gray's death.

Besides the poem already mentioned, Gray also wrote two Norse odes — *The Fatal Sisters* and *The Descent of Odin*; and left two beautiful fragments, the one in heroics, *The Alliance of Education and Government*, much admired by Gibbon—the other, part of an *Ode on the Pleasure arising from Vicissitude*, in which Gray anticipates that reasonable joy in common things, commonly regarded as the affirmation of Wordsworth. The style of Gray, though somewhat too rhetorical and overloaded with allegory, attains on the whole the qualities at which he aimed: with "extreme conciseness of expression" he is at the same time "pure, perspicuous, and musical." His feeling for nature is more manifest in his letters and journals than in his verse. Unlike Thomson, he never describes nature for its own sake, but employs it "as a graceful ornament which ought never to make the subject of poetry." His human sympathies are finely displayed in his *Elegy*; but he reaches his highest level, as a poet of the sublime, in *The Bard* and the *Ode to Adversity*.

"Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep;  
Isles, that crown the Ægean deep;  
Fields, that cool Ilissus laves,  
Or wherè Mæander's amber waves  
In lingering labyrinths creep,

How do your tuneful echoes languish,  
Mute, but to the voice of anguish,  
Where each old poetic mountain  
Inspiration breathed around,  
Every shade and hallowed fountain  
Murmured deep a solemn sound?"

—*The Progress of Poesy.*

"See the wretch, that long has tost  
On the thorny bed of pain,  
At length repair his vigor lost,  
And breathe and walk again.  
The meanest floweret of the vale,  
The simplest note that swells the gale,  
The common sun, the air, the skies,  
To him are opening paradise."

—*On Vicissitude.*

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear;  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

—*Elegy.*

"In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,  
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire;  
The birds in vain their amorous descant join;  
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire;  
These ears, alas! for other notes repine,  
A different object do these eyes require;  
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;  
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.  
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,  
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;  
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;  
To warm their little loves the birds complain;  
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,  
And weep the more because I weep in vain."

—*Sonnet on the Death of Richard West.*

"Oh, gently on thy suppliant's head,  
Dread goddess, lay thy chastening hand!  
Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,  
Nor circled with the vengeful band

(As by the impious thou art seen)  
 With thundering voice, and threatening mien,  
 With screaming Horror's funeral cry,  
 Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty.

“Thy form benign, O goddess, wear,  
 Thy milder influence impart,  
 Thy philosophic train be there  
 To soften, not to wound my heart;  
 The generous spark extinct revive,  
 Teach me to love and to forgive,  
 Exact my own defects to scan,  
 What others are, to feel, and know myself a man.”  
 —*Ode to Adversity.*

**William Cowper** (1731-1800) was born in the rectory at Great Berkhamstead, in Hertfordshire. He was of aristocratic connection by both parents. His father was a nephew of the first Earl Cowper, Lord Chancellor of England; his mother, who belonged to the family of Dr. Donne, the poet, traced her descent from royalty. An affectionate and extremely sensitive child, young Cowper was the special care of his mother; and when she died, the boy, then finishing his sixth year, was long inconsolable for her loss. More than half a century later he recalled the first grief of his life, and mourned her loss anew, in lines which are among the most tenderly pathetic in English poetry. His sorrows only began with her death. He was sent to a boarding-school, where he was bullied and tortured for two years by one of his school-fellows. It was this wretched experience rather than his memory of Westminster that was responsible for the bitter attack on public-school life contained in his *Tirocinium*. At Westminster Cowper spent over seven years in the study of the classics. Here he had Warren Hastings for a school-fellow, and Vincent Bourne for a teacher. There are pleasant reminiscences of this part of his life in the first book of *The Task*.

In his eighteenth year he was articled to an attorney in London, in whose office he had for companion the future Lord Chancellor Thurlow. For the study or the practice of

law, however, he had no hereditary or original aptitude; and though duly called to the bar in his twenty-third year, it was with a full consciousness of time misspent in the frivolous amusements of a young man, or misdirected from professional preparation to literary trifling, or at best to a continuation of classical study. It was now he fell in love with his cousin Theodora Cowper; but the young lady's father interposed to prevent any engagement. Theodora remained unmarried for his sake, and was the anonymous donor of many a gracefully bestowed benefit to the poet in after-life. At the age of thirty-two he found himself a briefless barrister, with but a slender patrimony (his father had died in 1756), and no prospects of success beyond the influence of family connections. Through this influence he was offered the clerkship of the Journals in the House of Lords, which he accepted; but finding that he was expected to appear for examination before the Lords, he shrank from the ordeal, and, sinking into despondency, sought the sad refuge of suicide as the only escape from a morbid sense of incapacity and disgrace. The rash attempt ended his professional career and threw him out of active life. Friends hurried him from London to a private asylum at St. Albans, where, after repeated fits of insanity, as the recollection of his ruined hopes returned to his mind, he became religious and reconciled to his fate.

With the pecuniary assistance of his relatives he settled in Huntingdon, where he made the acquaintance of the Unwin family, and by-and-by removed with them to the village of Olney, in Buckinghamshire. His career as a poet is identified with his residence here. Country walks, gardening, "books and music and the poet's toil" were his occupations; he also amused himself by keeping tame hares; but ever and again a mysterious melancholy descended upon his mind, and, while leaving his intellect unimpaired, paralyzed his energies and made him supremely miserable. The cheerful companionship of Lady Austen and his cousin Lady Hesketh, sister of Theodora, for a time dispelled the gloom; but it was Cowper's misfortune to be too frequently



left to himself, or to the well-meant but unhappy influence of the Rev. John Newton. It was with Newton, who had been a slave-trader in his youth, that he wrote the *Olney Hymns*, published in 1799. Mrs. Unwin, the gentle and unwearied friend of the latter half of his life, encouraged him, chiefly by way of mental diversion, to attempt poetry on a larger scale; and to her we owe what may be called his Moral Satires, all written in the measure and somewhat in the manner of Pope, and including as the best of the series the pieces on *Truth*, *Retirement*, and *Conversation*. The Satires appeared in 1782, when Cowper was already over fifty, and though they won a kind word from Johnson, can hardly be said to have drawn public attention. They were written too much under the severe eye of Newton.

Cowper was by no means depressed by their failure, and cheerfully undertook *The Task* at the suggestion of Lady Austen, who gave him "The Sofa" as an opening subject. Adopting blank-verse, he wrote with a free and unaffected pen a succession of six charming poems, familiarly and discursively descriptive of his rural walks and fireside joys at Olney. "The whole," in Cowper's own words, "has one tendency, to discountenance the modern enthusiasm after a London life, and to recommend rural ease and leisure as friendly to the cause of piety and virtue." "God made the country and man made the town" is the motto-line of *The Task*. The poetical genius of Cowper is thus in complete contrast to that of Pope, who turned his back on the country and directed his observation to city life; it agrees so far with that of Thomson, who preferred the country to the town, but, unlike Cowper, did not seek to shut the town out of the landscape. Even in the country Cowper's range is narrower than Thomson's; but his work as a descriptive writer has this peculiar recommendation, that his scenes and his peasants are always genuinely English, and are accurately drawn from actual observation. To Lady Austen also we owe the humorous ballad of *John Gilpin*, and the *Lines on the Loss of the Royal George*.

*The Task* appeared in 1785, and at once made Cowper fa-

mous. It surrounded him with friends new and old. Thurlow wrote to compliment him; Lady Hasketh came to see him. Mrs. Unwin and the poet now removed to a more cheerful residence at Weston, in the same neighborhood, where they were drawn into closer relations with the Throckmortons, a Roman Catholic family, to whom the manor belonged. To Mr. Throckmorton Cowper was indebted for the privilege of free access to the grounds of Weston Hall. Cowper was now happier than he had been since he left Westminster. It was now, having got *The Task* successfully off his hands, he luxuriated in the production of those short popular poems which he wrote with such charming ease. They include complimentary verses to Mrs. Throckmorton, turned with infinite grace; humorous verses on the small incidents of domestic life, such as the *Ode to Apollo* and *The Colubriad*; the stanzas which describe the solitude of the marooned seaman; anapæstic lines on the *Poplar Field*, etc. Unhappily for the cause of poetry, Cowper turned from the composition of occasional pieces to the translation of Homer. His version, which is in blank-verse, and, though less popular, more scholarly than Pope's, was published in 1791. A visit to the Sussex coast with Mrs. Unwin, then suffering from paralysis; a pension of £300 a year from the government in 1794; removal from Weston to East Dereham, in Norfolk; the death of Mrs. Unwin; and the recurrence of the old malady in greater force than ever—mark the closing years of the life of Cowper. Two small poems, among the most pathetic in the language, the tender lines *To Mary*, and the tragic verses of *The Castaway*, were written during this period; the latter was his last original composition, and shows his poetical faculty still unimpaired. He survived Mrs. Unwin three years and a half.

To a love of nature for her own sake, Cowper added extreme sensibility to the sufferings of animals. His sympathies with the industrious poor "that scorn to beg," his hatred of oppression and the Bastille way of government, his advocacy of the slave, and the high moral tone of his teaching are features of the poetical work of Cowper. His

style is full of idiomatic grace, clear, sensible, and copious without redundancy. His verse is wonderfully varied and often melodious—a result attained in part by a liberal use of unconventional language ; yet he is neither pedantic nor vulgar. In all he writes there is the presence of a well-bred personality, which gives a charm to his words even when one dissents from his opinion. With sense, wit, pathos, and playful humor at will, Cowper's deficiency is in passion. As a prose writer he merits high praise. His Letters are the best in the language.

"Come, Evening, once again, season of peace !  
 Return, sweet Evening, and continue long !  
 Methinks I see thee in the streaky west  
 With matron step slow moving, while the Night  
 Treads on thy sweeping train ; one hand employed  
 In letting fall the curtain of repose  
 On bird and beast, the other charged for man  
 With sweet oblivion of the cares of day :  
 Not sumptuously adorned, not needing aid,  
 Like homely-featured Night, of clustering gems ;  
 A star or two, just twinkling on thy brow,  
 Suffices thee ; save that the moon is thine  
 No less than hers, not worn indeed on high  
 With ostentatious pageantry, but set  
 With modest grandeur in thy purple zone,  
 Resplendent less, but of an ampler round.  
 Come then, and thou shalt find thy votary calm,  
 Or make me so. Composure is thy gift :  
 And whether I devote thy gentle hours  
 To books, to music, or the poet's toil ;  
 To weaving nets for bird-alluring fruit ;  
 Or twining silken threads round ivory reels,  
 When they command whom man was born to please,  
 I slight thee not, but make thee welcome still."

—*The Task.*

"My mother ! when I learned that thou wast dead,  
 Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed ?  
 Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,  
 Wretch even then, life's journey just begun ?  
 Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unfelt, a kiss ;  
 Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—  
 Ah, that maternal smile ! it answers, Yes.

I heard the bell tolled on thy funeral day,  
 I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,  
 And, turning from my nursery window, drew  
 A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!"

—*On Receipt of his Mother's Picture.*

"I am monarch of all I survey,  
 My right there is none to dispute!  
 From the centre all round to the sea,  
 I am lord of the fowl and the brute.  
 O Solitude! where are the charms  
 That sages have seen in thy face?  
 Better dwell in the midst of alarms,  
 Than reign in this horrible place.  
 I am out of humanity's reach,  
 I must finish my journey alone,  
 Never hear the sweet music of speech—  
 I start at the sound of my own. . . .  
 Ye winds that have made me your sport,  
 Convey to this desolate shore  
 Some cordial endearing report  
 Of a land I shall visit no more.  
 My friends, do they now and then send  
 A wish or a thought after me?  
 O tell me I yet have a friend,  
 Though a friend I am never to see."  
 —*Lines supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk.*

"Obscurest night involved the sky;  
 The Atlantic billows roared  
 When such a destined wretch as I,  
 Washed headlong from on board,  
 Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,  
 His floating home forever left. . . .

"No voice divine the storm allayed,  
 No light propitious shone;  
 When, snatched from all effectual aid,  
 We perished, each alone:  
 But I beneath a rougher sea,  
 And whelmed in deeper gulfs than he."  
 —*The Castaway.*

"Oh, happy shades—to me unblessed!  
 Friendly to peace, but not to me!"

How ill the scene that offers rest  
 And heart that cannot rest agree !  
 This glassy stream, that spreading pine,  
 Those alders quivering to the breeze,  
 Might soothe a soul less hurt than mine,  
 And please, if anything could please.  
 But fix'd unalterable Care  
 Foregoes not what she feels within,  
 Shows the same sadness everywhere,  
 And slights the season and the scene.  
 For all that pleased in wood or lawn,  
 While Peace possessed these silent bowers,  
 Her animating smile withdrawn,  
 Has lost its beauties and its powers.  
 The saint or moralist should tread  
 This moss-grown alley, musing slow ;  
 They seek like me the secret shade,  
 But not like me to nourish woe !  
 Me fruitful scenes and prospects waste  
 Alike admonish not to roam ;  
 These tell me of enjoyment past,  
 And those of sorows yet to come."

—*The Shrubby.*

"None here is happy but in part ;  
 Full bliss is bliss divine ;  
 There dwells some wish in every heart,  
 And doubtless one in thine.

"That wish, on some fair future day  
 Which Fate shall brightly gild  
 ('Tis blameless, be it what it may,)  
 I wish it all fulfilled."

—*The Poet's New-Year's Gift to Mrs. Throckmorton.*

No poet, whatever his race or age, has so completely won the affection and proud admiration of his countrymen as **Robert Burns** (1759-1796). For quite a century his name has been a household word, and his poetry a powerful reality wherever the Scottish language is intelligible. Yet the circumstances of his life—his lowly origin, brief and irregular education, continual toil and poverty, and early death—were all against the manifestation of his genius.

He was the eldest of a family of seven children born to

William Burns, a struggling and unsuccessful crofter originally from Forfarshire, and Agnes Brown, his wife. The house in which the poet was born was a clay habitation by the wayside about two miles from the town of Ayr; and the school he attended during the brief years of childhood was a similar hut beside it. His attendance at this school ceased before he was twelve; whatever scant instruction he received at a school after this was for the special object of improving his penmanship, or acquiring some knowledge of French or mensuration. At school he read the Bible, and specimens of the verse and prose of the reign of Queen Anne. Addison was the first poet to make music in his boyish ear; and it was Addison's *Vision of Mirza* that first awoke him to a sense of the beauty of prose. But Burns was self-taught, and read, with some direction from his father, whatever books he could borrow. At fifteen he was doing a man's work on his father's small farm, and inclined to rebel against the drudgery, solitude, and hopelessness of his lot. A morbid sense that he was "the most ungainly, awkward being in the parish" drove him to a dancing-school, contrary to his father's wishes; and he presently won a reputation among his rustic acquaintances for sociability, learning, and wit. He had already begun to write verses, his first attempt being a song about a country lass who had been his partner in the harvest-field. He was still reading, but now only books of poetry. Shakespeare, Pope, Shenstone, and Allan Ramsay were devoured with the same relish. Goldsmith and Fergusson were prime favorites. In 1780 he founded a social club at Tarbolton, and the year after joined a Masonic lodge, and wrote his first perfect lyric of *Mary Morison*.

It was now (1781) that he tried to escape from farm bondage by turning his attention to flax-dressing, at Irvine, on the Ayrshire coast. But his mill was burned down, and the penniless poet went back in 1782 to the labor of the farm. Gloomy days followed. His father died, prematurely old and a bankrupt. In 1784 the poet and his younger brother took a lease of the farm of Mossgiel, near



Mauchline, in Ayrshire; but the want of money, a succession of bad harvests, and an unfortunate *amour* wrecked his hopes and his peace of mind, and he resolved to emigrate. Before departing he published at Kilmarnock, in 1786, a collection of Scottish poems, most of which were written after he had made up his mind to emigrate. 1786 was his most productive year; between the 1st of January and the end of July of that year he was producing upon an average five pieces per week, many of which—such as *The Two Dogs*, *The Vision*, *Address to the Unco Guid*, *The Holy Fair*, *To a Mountain Daisy*—are among his best works. But he had already written *The Jolly Beggars* and *The Cotter's Saturday Night*. The book was to keep his name in mind when he was in Jamaica, and if it sold was to buy his passage. It was sold off within a month, and yielded a profit of £20. At the last moment he was advised to try a second edition in Edinburgh. He went to Edinburgh, where he stayed from November, 1786, till May, 1788. This long interval of idleness was varied by excursions to the Border and the Highlands.

In Edinburgh Burns was welcomed by all classes of society, and conducted himself with a manliness and spirit which won the admiration of all. The first to introduce him to the literary world of Edinburgh was Henry Mackenzie, who, by a criticism of his poems in *The Lounger*, proclaimed his originality, and drew attention to his genius. When the Edinburgh edition of his poems appeared in 1787 it was speedily exhausted, and reprinted twice in the same year. Besides establishing the fame of Burns as one of the leading poets of the century, and probably the best that Scotland had produced, it benefited him to the extent of £500. It was in Edinburgh that the famous meeting of Burns and Scott took place. Scott was then a lad of fifteen, and many years afterwards wrote an account of his impression of Burns. He remembered his strong and robust build, and the sense and shrewdness which were powerfully expressed in all his lineaments. "His eye alone," wrote Scott, "indicated the poetical character and temperament.

It was large, and of a dark cast, and literally glowed when he spoke with feeling or interest. I never saw such another eye in a human head, though I have seen the most distinguished men of my time." It was in Edinburgh, too, that he met Mrs. M'Lehose, the Clarinda of his correspondence, and the heroine of some very impassioned love-songs. His visit to Edinburgh was the turning-point of Burns's life. It did him both harm and good. The chief harm it did was to unfit him for the inevitable return to a life of rural industry; but it widened his knowledge of society, and impressed on his mind the striking contrast between rich and poor, against which he was afterwards so eloquently to protest in *A Man's a Man for a' That*.

The summer of 1788 found Burns settled in the farm of Ellisland, some five miles up the Nith from Dumfries. Hither he brought his wife, Jean Armour, the "bonny Jean" of his songs, and made a sincere effort to practise regular industry and the rural virtues. At first he seemed to succeed, and the first year or two of his married life was probably the happiest he had known or was to know. He had a nicely-situated and well-stocked farm, an affectionate wife, kindly neighbors, and a generous landlord. He was, besides, free of debt, and full of poetical hopes and plans. Here he wrote *To Mary in Heaven*—one of the tenderest of his serious love-songs—and the tale of *Tam o' Shanter*, popularly regarded as the best and most humorous of his poems. Unfortunately, as it proved, he accepted an appointment in the Excise towards the end of 1789. The salary was £50, and never rose above £70. Its recommendation to Burns was its certainty, and some hope of preferment. But the duties of his new office broke in upon the regular labor of the farm, and led him into habits of indiscriminate conviviality. At last he threw up his farm, and went, in 1791, to live in the town of Dumfries, where he was entirely dependent on his office in the Excise. His duties confined him to the port, and he found himself cut off from the wholesome and inspiring influences of solitude and nature. A democrat by nature, he now began to give

imprudent expression to his political opinions. For this he was reprimanded by the Board of Excise. He began to lose his friends, to fall into dissipated habits, to lose his self-respect, his health, and hope. He died in the middle of his thirty-eighth year, July 21, 1796. His principal poems during his residence in Dumfries were *Scots Wha Hae* and *A Man's a Man for a' That*—the latter written the year before his death.

Both the life and the poetry of Burns may be regarded as a protest against the sombreness and narrowness of the Scottish Calvinism of his day. His gospel was one of joy and hope, his prophecy the brotherhood of mankind. It was only in passing moments of despondent weakness that man seemed to him made to mourn.

Versatility of imagination, vigor of expression, and utter veracity of description, whether the theme is emotional or material, are the prime features of the poetical art of Burns. In song he is matchless. Here his theme is mainly love, and the treatment of it mainly passionate. To this class of his lyrics belong *Mary Morison*, *Of a' the Airts*, *Sweet Afton*, *Highland Mary*, *A Red Red Rose*, and many others. His satire is as strong as his song is sweet. It is mainly directed against hypocrisy in religious profession, as in *Holy Willie's Prayer* and *The Address to the Unco Guid*. His humor, which ranges from playful badinage to rattling fun, and is often dashed with sublimity, horror, or pathos, is well displayed in *The Address to the Deil*, *Tam o' Shanter*, *The Jolly Beggars*, and *The Holy Fair*. His tenderness and sympathy towards all creatures are visible in *A Winter Night*, the *Address to the Mountain Daisy*, and *To the Field Mouse*. His graphic power in describing natural and social scenes is shown in *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, *The Brigs of Ayr*, *The Twa Dogs*, and *Halloween*. Burns found themes for poetry in his daily intercourse with man and nature. No subject was too humble for his muse. He was eminently patriotic, yet his sympathies were not confined to Scotland. He is the poet of common humanity, whose everyday toil, joys, sorrows, and aspirations he glorified by his song. The

spontaneity of his songs; their warmth, purity, and freshness; their melody and directness of appeal, were qualities which had long been absent from lyrical poetry. Song “gushed from his heart, as rain from the clouds of summer, or tears from the eyelids start.”

“What tho’, like commoners of air,  
 We wander out, we know not where,  
 But either house or hall?  
 Yet nature’s charms, the hills and woods,  
 The sweeping vales, an’ foaming floods,  
 Are free alike to all.  
 In days when daisies deck the ground,  
 And blackbirds whistle clear,  
 With honest joy our hearts will bound  
 To see the coming year:  
 On braes when we please, then,  
 We’ll sit an’ sowth<sup>1</sup> a tune; <sup>1</sup> *hum, or*  
 Syne rhyme till’t, we’ll time till’t, *whistle low*  
 And sing’t when we hae done.

“It’s no in titles nor in rank;  
 It’s no in wealth like Lon’on bank,  
 To purchase peace and rest;  
 It’s no in makin’ muckle mair<sup>2</sup>; <sup>2</sup> *much more*  
 It’s no in books; it’s no in lear,<sup>3</sup> <sup>3</sup> *learning*  
 To make us truly blest:  
 If happiness hae not her seat  
 An’ centre in the breast,  
 We may be wise, or rich, or great,  
 But never can be blest:  
 Nae treasures, nor pleasures,  
 Could make us happy lang;  
 The heart’s aye the part aye  
 That makes us right or wrang.”

—*Epistle to Davie.*

“Whyles owre a linn the burnie plays,  
 As through the glen it wimpl’t;  
 Whyles round a rocky scaur<sup>4</sup> it strays, <sup>4</sup> *cliff*  
 Whyles in a wiel<sup>5</sup> it dimpl’t; <sup>5</sup> *pool*  
 Whyles glitter’d to the nightly rays,  
 Wi’ bickerin’, dancin’ dazzle;

Whyles cookit<sup>1</sup> underneath the braes, <sup>1</sup>*hid and peeped*  
 Below the spreading hazle.

Unseen that night."

—*Halloween.*

"Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,  
 An' weary winter comin' fast,  
 And cozie here, beneath the blast,  
     Thou thought to dwell,  
 Till crash! the cruel coulter past,  
     Out thro' thy cell.

"That wee bit heap o' leaves and stibble  
 Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!  
 Now thou's turned out for a' thy trouble,  
     But<sup>2</sup> house or hald, <sup>2</sup>*without*  
 To thole the winter's sleety dribble,  
     An' cranreuch<sup>3</sup> cauld! <sup>3</sup>*hoarfrost*

"But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane<sup>4</sup> <sup>4</sup>*alone*  
 In proving foresight may be vain;  
 The best-laid schemes o' mice and men  
     Gang aft a-gley,<sup>5</sup> <sup>5</sup>*off the right line*  
 An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain  
     For promised joy.

"Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!  
 The present only toucheth thee;  
 But och! I backward cast my ee  
     On prospects drear;  
 An' forward, though I canna see,  
     I guess an' fear."

—*To a Mouse.*

"Then gently scan your brother man,  
 Still gentler sister woman;  
 Tho' they may gang a kennin<sup>6</sup> wrang, <sup>6</sup>*a small degree*  
 To step aside is human:  
 One point must still be greatly dark,  
     The moving why they do it!  
 And just as lamely can ye mark  
     How far perhaps they rue it.

"Who made the heart, 'tis He alone  
 Decidedly can try us;

He knows each cord—its various tone,  
 Each spring—its various bias:  
 Then at the balance let's be mute,  
 We never can adjust it;  
 What's done we partly may compute,  
 But know not what's resisted."

—*Address to the Unco Guid.*

"O Mary, at thy window be—  
 It is the wished, the trysted hour!  
 Those smiles and glances let me see,  
 That make the miser's treasure poor.  
 How blythely wad I bide the stoure,  
 A weary slave frae sun to sun,  
 Could I the rich reward secure—  
 The lovely Mary Morison.

"Yestreen, when to the trembling string  
 The dance gaed<sup>1</sup> thro' the lighted ha', <sup>'went</sup>  
 To thee my fancy took its wing—  
 I sat, but neither heard nor saw.  
 Though this was fair, and that was braw,  
 And yon the toast of a' the toun,  
 I sighed, and said amang them a',  
 'Ye are na Mary Morison.'

"Oh, Mary, canst thou wreck his peace  
 Wha for thy sake wad gladly dee?  
 Or canst thou break that heart of his,  
 Whase only faut is loving thee?  
 If love for love thou wilt na gie,  
 At least be pity to me shown;  
 A thought ungentle canna be  
 The thought o' Mary Morison."

—*Mary Morison.*

"That sacred hour can I forget?  
 Can I forget the hallowed grove,  
 Where, by the winding Ayr, we met,  
 To live one day of parting love? . . .  
 Ayr, gurgling, kissed his pebbled shore,  
 O'erhung with wild-woods, thickening green;  
 The fragrant birch and hawthorn hoar  
 Twined amorous round the raptured scene;  
 The flowers sprang wanton to be prest;  
 The birds sang love on every spray;



Till too, too soon the glowing west  
 Proclaimed the speed of wingéd day.  
 Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,  
 And fondly broods with miser care;  
 Time but th' impression stronger makes,  
 As streams their channels deeper wear."

—*To Mary in Heaven.*

#### OTHER POETS

To Edmund Waller (1605-1687) belongs the credit, not of inventing, but of introducing the heroic couplet as the popular vehicle of serious poetry, and of instituting by his peculiar use of it a new kind of English verse. If Dryden established and Pope perfected the artificial or classical school, Waller founded it; and this he did independently of French influence, and before French literary taste had begun to act on English style. He may fairly be regarded as the first in time of our writers of modern verse.

Waller was born in Hertfordshire; was of kin to both Cromwell and Hampden; and owned rich estates in the county of Buckingham. His political and his poetical career began together. He was only eighteen when he first entered Parliament, and in the same year he appears to have written in couplets of remarkable smoothness his first poem, on a subject connected with the return of Prince Charles from Spain. In politics he was an unprincipled time-server, shifting from Roundhead to Royalist when the change seemed to answer his purpose. In 1644, for his share in a plot to aid the king, he was apprehended by the party to which he nominally belonged, fined £10,000, and confined for a year. He next went to France, but returning ten years later he wrote two panegyrics, one on Cromwell living, the other on Cromwell dead; and yet was ready at the Restoration with a poetical welcome to Charles II. "When he presented this poem to the king, his majesty said he thought it much inferior to his Panegyric on Cromwell. 'Sir,' replied Mr. Waller, 'we poets never succeed so well in writing truth as in fiction.'" Waller's verse consists almost entirely of short occasional pieces, but as these are numerous, and were spread over many years—for he went on writing till he was eighty—the influence of his style on contemporary verse was on that account more continuous, and therefore greater. The best of his poetry consists of the amatory lyrics to Saccharissa (Lady Dorothy Sidney, daughter of the Earl of Leicester). He was about eighty when he wrote his *Divine Poems*, the most ambitious of which—*Of Divine Love*—is in six short cantos. Waller was master of a variety of measures; but the style in all is the same—cor-

rect and elegant, if somewhat cold. Good specimens of his lighter vein are the lines "*On a Girdle*," and the song "*Go, Lovely Rose*." His graver style is well exemplified in the Epilogue or l'Envoi of his *Divine Poems*, concluding thus:

"The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,  
Lets in new light, thro' chinks that time has made;  
Stronger by weakness, wiser, men become,  
As they draw near to their eternal home.  
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,  
That stand upon the threshold of the new."

The son of a Worcestershire yeoman, **Samuel Butler** (1612–1680) was partly educated at Worcester Grammar School, and partly self-taught while acting in the capacity of clerk or tutor to various Presbyterian families during the period of Puritan ascendancy. In their service he had ample means of remarking the many disagreeable oddities of character and conduct which distinguished the Puritan party from the Cavaliers. His sympathies were with the Royalists; but these he was obliged to conceal, consoling himself in the meantime with a purpose of publicly satirizing the whole hateful sect—for such he regarded them—when opportunity should offer. The opportunity came with the Restoration, and in 1663 appeared the first part of *Hudibras*, probably the wittiest and longest burlesque in the language. Sir Hudibras, from whom the poem is named, is a kind of puritanic Don Quixote, who "rides forth a-colonelling." He is supposed to typify the leaders of the Puritan party. The portrait is a caricature of Sir Samuel Luke, one of Cromwell's officers, in whose house in Bedfordshire Butler had for some years found uncoun- genial employment. The learning of the poem is evident on every page, while the wit, which wearies at last from its profuse- ness, and disgusts too often from its unfairness, owes much of its force to the ease and originality of the rhymes. Butler himself never shared in the popularity of his poem. The king quoted it, but neglected the author. A soured and disappointed man, he died at last as meanly as he had lived before the publication of his lampoon rescued his name from obscurity. His own lines illustrate his success in life:

"Success! the mark no mortal wit  
Or surest hand can always hit:  
For, whatsoe'er we perpetrate,  
We do but row—we're steered by fate;  
Which in success oft disinherits,  
For spurious causes, noblest merits."

Only, while his merits were many and great, they were not the noblest.

An important link, connecting Dryden with Waller in the matter of style, is **Sir John Denham** (1615-1688). Denham was born in Dublin, but educated at Oxford. When the Civil War broke out he attached himself to the Royalists, and gave the same service to the king as Cowley gave to the queen—deciphering the royal correspondence. After the Restoration he was knighted, and appointed, in succession to Inigo Jones, surveyor-general of the king's buildings. His successor was Sir Christopher Wren. Denham's youth was dissolute, and his later years were darkened by insanity. He is memorable for *Cooper's Hill*, a topographical poem—the first of its kind—descriptive of the view of London, Windsor, and the Thames valley, running to about one hundred and fifty heroic couplets, and concluding with an account of a stag-hunt. The gem of the piece is the apostrophe to the river:

“ O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream  
My great example, as it is my theme !  
Tho' deep, yet clear; tho' gentle, yet not dull;  
Strong without rage; without o'erflowing, full.”

**Abraham Cowley** (1618-1667), the youngest child, born posthumously, of a London shopkeeper, was educated first at Westminster, afterwards at Cambridge, and finally at Oxford. Oxford was the headquarters of the Cavaliers when the Civil War was impending; and thither young Cowley, being a Royalist, naturally turned on his ejection from Cambridge. After the defeat of Charles at Naseby he followed the queen to France, where he was employed in deciphering the royal correspondence, till the execution of the king in 1649. He continued to live abroad in the service of the exiled Stuarts till 1656. The Restoration came, and Cowley expected and deserved to be rewarded; but was forced to content himself with a grant of a lease of lands at Chertsey. Here, in the retirement of a country life, to which he had always been inclined, and “in no inglorious case”—for he had worked long and loyally for an ungrateful party—he hoped to enjoy in peace the sweets of solitude and study. The fulfilment of his hopes began badly: “The first night that I came hither,” he wrote, under date May 21, 1665, “I caught so great a cold as made me keep my chamber for ten days; and, two after, had such a bruise on my ribs with a fall that I am yet unable to move or turn myself in bed. Besides, I can get no money from my tenants, and have my meadows eaten up every night by cattle put in by my neighbors.” Two years and two months after thus writing to his friend Dr. Sprat, Cowley was dead; but he had found time dur-

ing his country life, at Chertsey, or at Barn Elms, to compose those beautiful prose Essays—some ten or twelve only in all—for which, rather than for his poetry, he is now chiefly read, if not remembered.

Cowley early began to write verses. In one of the best of his Essays—*Of Myself*—he tells with the unaffected frankness of Montaigne how he became a poet: “I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first with such chimes of verse as have never since left ringing there; for I remember when I began to read, and to take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother’s parlor (I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read any book but of devotion), but there was wont to lie Spenser’s works. This I happened to fall upon, and was infinitely delighted with the stories of the knights and giants and monsters and brave houses which I found everywhere there (though my understanding had little to do with all this), and by degrees with the tinkling of the rhyme and dance of the numbers, so that I think I had read him all over before I was twelve years old, and was thus irremediably made a poet.” At fifteen he was the author of a published volume of verse, entitled *Poetical Blossoms*; to which, before he was twenty, he added another volume of poetry, and *Love’s Riddle*, a play. He was engaged in writing his Love verses during the early years of the Civil War, and continued their composition in France, where he came under Waller’s influence: they appeared with the title of *The Mistress* in 1647, and are memorable as showing his style in the transitional stage, which connects him with the older romantic school of poetry on the one side and the new critical school on the other. In 1656 appeared his *Pindaric Odes*, falsely so called, and four books—all that he wrote—of an unfinished epic in heroics, intended for his masterpiece, *The Davideis*. Fancy and intellect are more conspicuous in the poetry of Cowley than imagination or passion. His quaint expressions and far-fetched metaphors, in a word his “conceits,” cumber and disfigure his lines. If the poet is read at all now, it is for such sprightly trifles as *The Chronicle*, a review of his sweethearts, and such pensive memorial verses as the *Elegy on the Death of William Hervey* or his eulogy of Richard Crashaw. The latter shows genuine feeling:

“Poet and Saint! to thee alone are given  
The two most sacred names of earth and heaven;  
The hard and rarest union that can be,  
Next that of Godhead with humanity. . . .  
His faith, perhaps, in some nice tenets might  
Be wrong; his life, I’m sure, was in the right;

And I myself a Catholic will be  
So far at least, great saint, to pray to thee!"

Better known for his prose than for his poetry, but best known for his incorruptible patriotism, **Andrew Marvell** (1620-1678) deserves much more regard for his poetry than is generally allotted him. Son of a Hull clergyman, he was educated at Cambridge; visited the Continent; was for two or three years tutor to Mary, daughter of General Fairfax; became in 1657, on Milton's own recommendation, assistant secretary to the government of Cromwell; represented Hull in the Restoration Parliament, and resisted the bribery and flattery of Charles II., preferring the independence, though meagre, of a member's pay, with freedom to flagellate iniquity in high places. His poetry shows two very different aspects. Prior to the Restoration it is mostly lyrical, and reveals a fine feeling for Nature with Wordsworthian touches; after that event it is satirical on the subject of vice and tyranny in Church and State, and occasionally as fierce, and even as coarse, as the invectives of Juvenal. It was Marvell's style of satire, the regular heroic couplet, that Dryden adopted, in preference to Donne's or Butler's. His ablest satires are *Last Instructions to a Painter*, and *The Character of Holland*; of his lyrical pieces, *The Emigrants in the Bermudas*, *Thoughts in a Garden*, and the girl's lament for her dead fawn are exquisite examples. No more startling contrast in a poet's work could be offered than the following lines show beside certain passages that might be culled from the satires of Marvell:

- "The wanton troopers riding by  
Have shot my fawn, and it will die.  
Ungentle men! They cannot thrive  
Who killed thee. . . .  
It had so sweet a breath! and oft  
I blushed to see its foot more soft  
And white—shall I say than my hand?  
Than any lady's in the land! . . .
- "With what a pretty skipping grace  
It oft would challenge me the race;  
And when't had left me far away,  
'Twould stay, and run again, and stay. . . .  
I have a garden of my own,  
But so with lilies overgrown  
And roses that you would it guess  
To be a little wilderness:  
Among the beds of lilies I  
Have sought it oft—where it should lie;

Yet could not, till itself would rise,  
Find it, although before mine eyes."

The first in time, and even yet one of the most brilliant and easy, of writers of that kind of poetry which, originating in France, is known as *vers de société*, was **Matthew Prior** (1664-1721). He was born of humble parentage in Dorsetshire, but was indebted to an uncle, the keeper of a tavern in London, for an excellent education at Westminster School. The Earl of Dorset, it is said, found him reading Horace in his uncle's tavern, and sent him to Cambridge, where in due time he became a fellow of John's College. While still a student he became acquainted with Charles Montague, and wrote, conjointly with him, that happy burlesque of Dryden's *Hind and Panther*—*The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*. He was then twenty-three. Through the influence of the Earl of Dorset he was appointed to various offices in the diplomatic service of the Whigs, acting now as secretary to ambassadors and now as ambassador-in-chief, and by his own geniality and tact maintaining the position to the satisfaction of the government. In 1701 he entered Parliament, and shifted to the Tory side. In 1711 he was again employed on an embassy to France, and being suspected of a treasonable intrigue with the agents of Louis, was, on his return to London in 1715, put in prison by the Whigs for two years. It was fault enough that along with Bolingbroke he had negotiated the unpopular Treaty of Utrecht. On his liberation he lived on his fellowship and by the proceeds of his published verse. In 1709 he had brought out the first collected edition of his poems, prefaced by a noble Dedication in prose to the young Earl of Dorset, the son of his patron. Ten years later he issued a folio edition to subscribers, and realized four thousand guineas by the sale. This sum, augmented by gifts from his aristocratic admirers, was sufficient to keep him in comfort for the short remainder of his life.

Of all the artificial poets Prior writes with the greatest ease. He is especially clever as a *raconteur* in verse. His epigrams have point and finish. Of his many light lyrics, the *Better Answer to Cloe Jealous* shows him in his happiest and most characteristic vein :

"What I speak, my fair Cloe, and what I write, shows  
The difference there is betwixt Nature and art :  
I court others in verse, but I love thee in prose ;  
And they have my whimsies, but thou hast my heart. . . .

"So when I am wearied with wand'ring all day,  
To thee, my delight, in the evening I come :  
No matter what beauties I saw on my way—  
They were but my visits, but thou art my home.



“Then finish, dear Cloe, this pastoral war ;  
 And let us like Horace and Lydia agree ;  
 For thou art a girl as much brighter than her,  
 As he was a poet sublimer than me.”

Style and humor are happily blended in his *Ballad of the Thief and the Cordelier*. His odes and his translations show him as the court poet and the scholar respectively. His most ambitious attempts are his *Alma* and his *Solomon*—the former a conversation in three Hudibrastic cantos on the Progress of the Mind, between Matthew and Richard ; the latter a monologue by King Solomon, in three books of heroic verse, on the themes of Knowledge, Pleasure, and Power. *Solomon* he regarded as his masterpiece ; probably only two lines of it live to-day :

“Abra was ready ere I called her name,  
 And, tho’ I called another, Abra came.”

Born of English parents of easy means in Dublin, and educated at Trinity College, **Thomas Parnell** (1679-1718) entered the Church, and was Archdeacon of Clogher when his countryman Swift introduced him to Harley, Earl of Oxford, and to Pope. The death of Queen Anne ruined his hopes of preferment as a preacher in London ; and falling into intemperance of wine through domestic losses, he was retiring to Ireland, where by Swift’s influence he had been appointed vicar of Finglass in the diocese of Dublin, when he died at Chester on the way in his thirty-ninth year. Four years later his works were collected, and for the first time published by Pope. When Pope’s *Odyssey* appeared in 1725 the *Battle of the Frogs and Mice* was from Parnell’s pen. The poems of Parnell include *The Hermit*, a narrative poem in limpid heroic couplets, intended to show that God governs his world, working out his ends by secondary means ; a *Night Piece*, of some originality of thought ; and a *Hymn to Contentment*, which, as the opening verses will serve to prove, shows a free and fine management of the eight-syllabled measure :

“The silent heart which grief assails  
 Treads soft and lonesome o’er the vales ;  
 Sees daisies open, rivers run ;  
 And seeks, as I have vainly done,  
 Amusing thought ; but learns to know  
 That solitude’s the nurse of woe.”

**Edward Young** (1681-1765), a son of the rector of Upham in Hants, was educated at Winchester and Oxford. His first serious

efforts to satisfy an ambition which in one form or another swayed his whole long life were in the tragic drama. These, beginning with *Busiris* in 1719, and continued in *The Revenge* and *The Brothers*, are rhetorical rather than passionate, and were only partially successful. He next ventured on a political career at forty, but failed to find a seat in Parliament. Next he tried satiric verse, and between 1725 and 1728 turned off a series of seven pieces, to which he gave the collective title of *Love of Fame the Universal Passion*. It was his misfortune that Pope entered the arena as Young was leaving it; *The Dunciad* threw *The Universal Passion* into oblivion. Near fifty Young took holy orders, and was appointed by his college (All-Souls') to the living of Welwyn in Hertfordshire. Here he was destined to remain for the rest of his life, disappointed of the bishopric for which he sighed, but partly consoled with the hand and fortune of Lady Elizabeth Lee. It was while he was a clergyman that he wrote his worst and his best verse. His interminable oceanic odes and sea-pieces show his utter destitution of any lyrical power; but his *Complaint, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality*, though far too long (it is in nine books of blank-verse of about ten thousand lines), and too manifestly tricked out with trope and epigram, is a powerful composition with many effective passages. He was over sixty when he began it, and but for it his fame as an author would hardly have survived his own generation. The great influence of this poem, which was felt at once on its first appearance, is only now dying out. The subjoined quotation illustrates the manner of *Night Thoughts*:

“Procrastination is the thief of time.  
 Year after year it steals, till all are fled;  
 And to the mercies of a moment leaves  
 The vast concerns of an eternal scene. . . .  
 At thirty man suspects himself a fool;  
 Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;  
 At fifty chides his infamous delay,  
 Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;  
 In all the magnanimity of thought  
 Resolves—and re-resolves; then dies the same!”

Allan Ramsay (1686–1758) was born in Leadhills, the highest village in Scotland, in the house of his father, the manager of the Earl of Hopetoun's lead-mines. At the age of fifteen he was sent to Edinburgh, where he became first a wig-maker, and afterwards a bookseller. His book-shop was the lounge for the literary wits of the northern capital; and there might now and again be seen

the good-humored face of Gay, a summer visitor to Scotland in the train of the Duchess of Queensberry. Ramsay had a great admiration for the English humorist of his time, to whom his own joyous nature and Hogarthian delineations of low life were an additional recommendation. His talent for humorous description was developed in a local Easy Club; from the club his verses found their way into the town, being hawked about the streets of Edinburgh in broadsides at a penny. In 1721 a collection of his poems appeared in quarto, which established his reputation as a "makar," while it improved his fortunes by about four hundred guineas. In 1725 he published what is generally allowed to be the best pastoral after Theocritus—*The Gentle Shepherd*. It is in the form of a five-act drama, interspersed with songs; and is even yet more thoroughly and satisfactorily representative of rural life and manners than any other poem in the Scottish language. Ramsay did a further service to Scottish poetry by editing, in 1724, *The Tea-Table Miscellany* and *The Evergreen*, two collections of national verse, mostly lyrical and mostly anonymous. Both Ramsay's life and his writings were a protest against the narrowness of Presbyterianism. He scandalized the clergy by building a theatre, and by instituting the Circulating Library, through which at a cheap rate all the publications of London were introduced to the Edinburgh public. His merit as a poet lies in reviving the traditional poetical spirit of his countrymen at a time when it seemed to be dying out; and in preparing the way for Burns, both by creating an audience for him, and by indicating for his guidance the traditional lines to success of song and humorous story. Ramsay's songs, such as *Now wat ye waha I met yestreen* and *Auld Lang Syne* stand in such natural relation to those of Burns as the green bud bears to the glowing blossom. The naturalism of Ramsay, realistic rather than romantic, is well revealed in *The Gentle Shepherd*:

"Gae far'er up the burn to Habbie's Howe,  
Where a' the sweets o' spring an' simmer grow:  
Between twa birks, out o'er a little lin,  
The water fa's, an' makes a singan din;  
A pool breast-deep beneath, as clear as glass,  
Kisses, wi' easy whirls, the bord'ring grass.  
We'll end our washing while the morning's cool,  
An', when the day grows het, we'll to the pool,  
There wash oursel's—'tis healthfu' now in May,  
An' sweetly cauler<sup>1</sup> on sae warm a day." <sup>1</sup>*cool and fresh*

Not the least effective of Ramsay's humorous poems are his continuation of James I.'s *Christ's Kirk on the Green*, on the model of

which Fergusson wrote his *Leith Races* and Burns his *Holy Fair*; and his imitations of Horace, notably his version of the famous ninth ode, with the Pentland hills for Soracte :

“Then fling on coals, an’ ripe the ribs,<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup>*stir the fire*  
 An’ beek<sup>2</sup> the house baith but an’ ben; <sup>2</sup>*keep warm, bake*  
 That mutchkin-stoup<sup>3</sup>—it hauds but dribs,<sup>4</sup> <sup>3</sup>*pint measure*  
 Then let’s get in the tappit hen.<sup>5</sup> . . . <sup>4</sup>*holds only drops*  
<sup>5</sup>*Scots quart*  
 “Be sure ye dinna quat<sup>6</sup> the grip <sup>6</sup>*quit*  
 O’ ilka joy when ye are young,  
 Before auld age your vitals nip,  
 An’ lay ye twafauld o’er a rung.<sup>7</sup>” <sup>7</sup>*staff*

Born the same year as Pope, **John Gay** (1688–1732) had the enviable fortune to be known and loved by all his famous contemporaries, even Pope included. The wonder is the greater that at one time Gay’s popularity shot up to the height of Pope’s. Like Prior, however, and not in this respect alone like him, Gay was without ambition, and quite disarmed jealousy and rivalry. Pope has described him—

“Of manners gentle, of affections mild;  
 In wit a man, simplicity—a child.”

He was of a good but decayed Devonshire family, and was early apprenticed to a London silk-mercator. The business was not to his liking, and he abandoned it for literature. He first made a mark for himself, after two previous attempts at authorship, with his *Shepherd’s Week*, a series of pastorals, one for each working-day of the week, intended to burlesque the style of Ambrose Philips. The verses unexpectedly found favor with the public as genuine pastorals, realistically descriptive of English rustic life. He followed up this success with *Trivia*, a London poem descriptive of the shifting scenery of the streets. He next attempted comedy, but unsuccessfully at first; till Swift suggesting that he should try his hand at a Newgate pastoral, he produced in 1728 the English opera with which his name is now mostly associated. His *Fables* had begun to appear the year before; *Polly*, a sequel to *The Beggar’s Opera*, came the year after. Those three years were the time when Gay’s name was as popular as Pope’s. They brought him both fame and money. Gay spent a large part of his short life a familiar and fondled inmate in the houses of people of quality; latterly he lived altogether with the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry. Gay

has much of the grace and clearness of Prior; he touches a deeper lyrical chord in the ballad beginning "'Twas when the seas were roaring," and the song of *Black-eyed Susan*; and while, like Prior, he is the polished and easy-going man about town, unlike Prior he has good knowledge of, and genuine love for, external nature.

"But I, who ne'er was blessed by Fortune's hand,  
Nor brightened ploughshares in paternal land,  
Long in the noisy town have been immured,  
Respired its smoke, and all its cares endured.  
Fatigued at last, a calm retreat I chose,  
And soothed my harassed mind with sweet repose,  
Where fields and shades and the refreshing clime  
Inspire the sylvan song, and prompt my rhyme."

—*Rural Sports* (pub. 1713).

**William Collins** (1721-1759) was as much neglected in his lifetime as he is at present overpraised. Whatever be his position among English lyrical poets, there is no doubt that his note is at least singularly rich and pure. Johnson, who knew him intimately, tells the short and sad story of his life. He was born at Chichester, the son of a hatter, and was well educated, first at Winchester and afterwards at Oxford. While still an undergraduate he published *Persian* (or *Oriental*) *Eclogues*. "About 1744," says Johnson, "he came to London a literary adventurer, with many projects in his head and very little money in his pocket." Here for a few years he led a life of constant toil and great privation, unable, from poverty or irresolution, to write the great histories and the grand tragedies, or realize any of the golden dreams, of his imagination. There appeared only in 1746 a thin volume of twelve Odes, which, though containing a reputation, failed to find any readers. Collins was so mortified at the failure that he recalled the edition and destroyed it. Happily about the same time he made the acquaintance of the amiable Thomson, to be near whom he went to live at Richmond. There is some reason to think that Collins is the pensive man "of special grave remark," whose face "o'erspread with tender gloom" looks out upon us from the *Castle of Indolence*. That the friendship of the two gentle poets was of the tenderest kind can be doubted by none who has read—and who has not read?—the elegiac *Ode on the Death of Thomson*. This, one of the finest of his poems, was written in 1748; next year fortune came to him upon whom Fame had turned a deaf ear; an uncle, a Colonel Martin, dying, left him an independence. He was then only twenty-eight; but hope was dead within him. He sank gradually into melancholy, from which neither foreign travel

nor sisterly affection nor the consolations of religion could rescue him.

Collins left behind him considerably less than two thousand lines of verse altogether; yet much of this is pure ore. His longest poems are an *Ode to Liberty* and another on the *Popular Superstitions of Scotland*; they contain some able passages. But his fame securely rests on his wondrous unrhymed *Ode to Evening*, his *Ode on the Passions*, and his *Ode on the Death of Thomson*.

“Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore  
When Thames in summer wreaths is drest,  
And oft suspend the dashing oar  
To bid his gentle spirit rest. . . .

“But thou who own’st that earthly bed—  
Ah! what will every dirge avail?  
Or tears which Love and Pity shed  
That mourn beneath the gliding sail?”

Oliver Goldsmith (1728–1774) was one of the most industrious and successful writers of his age, using his pen in almost every department of literature, and touching nothing without adorning it. His most important work was done in prose, and for that reason a sketch of his life is deferred till we come to consider the essayists. But the singular grace and continued popularity of his poetry demand for it some notice here. The first of his poems, *The Traveller*, begun at least during his wanderings on the Continent, and suggested by that romantic episode in his earlier life, was finished in London, probably in 1757; but the publication of it was delayed till 1765. Five years later, in 1770, he published *The Deserted Village*, a poem in the same metre and manner as *The Traveller*, and of nearly the same length. It is further an expansion, in a series of contrasted views designed to represent the evils of rural depopulation, of a couplet in *The Traveller*:

“Have we not seen, at Pleasure’s lordly call,  
The smiling, long-frequented village fall?”

These two companion poems have for their object to demonstrate the futility of political government to remedy the ills of life. Johnson formulated the argument in a couplet which is more remarkable for its pith than its poetry:

“How small, of all that human hearts endure,  
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure!”



But the charm of the poems lies in the picturesque views of national and of village life, and the simplicity and sweetness of the diction. For truthfulness of observation and harmony of language the description of summer evening in Auburn remains unmatched in English poetry :

“Sweet was the sound when oft at evening’s close  
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose.  
There, as I passed with careless steps and slow,  
The mingling notes came softened from below ;  
The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung,  
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young,  
The noisy geese that gabbled o’er the pool,  
The playful children just let loose from school,  
The watch-dog’s voice that bayed the whispering wind,  
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind—  
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,  
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.”

A heaven of repose hangs over the whole charming scene. In these exquisite poems Goldsmith’s return to the couplet of Pope served to exhaust its capabilities as an instrument of verbal music. The ballad of *Edwin and Angelina*, and the two comic elegies, *On the Death of a Mad Dog*, and *On Mrs. Mary Blaize*, make up, with the pleasant anapæstic satires, *Retaliation* and *The Haunch of Venison*, the rest of Goldsmith’s poetry that is worthy of note.

**George Crabbe** (1754-1832) was born at Aldborough, on the Suffolk coast, in the house of his father, the saltmaster, or collector of the salt duties there. His father, having nothing else to give him, provided him with a good education, and apprenticed him to a surgeon; but after a dreary attempt to gather a practice in his native town, young Crabbe laid aside the scalpel for the pen, and went off to London to try his fortune in literature with three pounds in his purse. He shortly found himself destitute, and threw himself on the generosity of Edmund Burke, who at once befriended him with his hospitality, his advice, and his influence. This was in 1781. In the same year he published *The Library*, which brought him into notice. He was now persuaded to enter the Church, and having qualified himself for the office, was by-and-by, through Burke’s influence, appointed chaplain to the Duke of Rutland. After various experiences as a clergyman in Dorsetshire and elsewhere, he was presented by the duke, in 1814, to the living of Trowbridge, in Wiltshire, worth about £800 a year, and there he remained for the rest of his life. He was a quiet, simple-minded,

conscientious parson—as like Parson Adams as twelve to a dozen (so Lord Thurlow told him)—spending a large proportion of his income, when by his stipend and the sale of his books he found himself a rich man, in unobtrusive acts of charity. A pleasant episode in his later life was his visit, in 1822, to Sir Walter Scott, in Edinburgh.

Crabbe wrote a great deal, and mostly on the same kind of subject—the annals of the poor. At intervals of two years, after *The Library*, appeared in succession *The Village* and *The Newspaper*. A silent interval of fully twenty-two years passed, and then began the gloomy series of his later poems—*The Parish Register* in 1807, *The Borough* in 1810, *Tales in Verse*, 1812, and *Tales of the Hall*, 1819. Crabbe has received his highest praise from Byron, who described him as “Nature’s sternest painter, and her best.” If by “Nature” Byron meant “poor human nature,” it may be allowed that Crabbe was sufficiently stern; but if he is also her “best” painter, meaning perfectly true and faithful in his photographs of low life, “surely poor folk maun be wretches.” There is no humor in Crabbe; no jollity among his beggars. Burns’s estimate—and he had ample means of judging—is better than Crabbe’s best; discussing the subject in his *Two Dogs*, he gives it—“They’re nae sae wretched’s ane wad think;” and the whole poem contains the proof. Crabbe may have widened our sympathies for the poor, as he certainly widened in his own way our knowledge of their miseries; but his verse leaves a depressing effect on the mind, like a visit to the jail or the workhouse. He is more tolerable as a stern painter of external nature, as the following description of the open commons and sterile farms near Aldborough will serve to show:

“Lo! where the heath, with withering brake grown o’er,  
Lends the light turf that warms the neighbouring poor;  
From thence a length of burning sands appears  
Where the thin harvest waves its withered ears;  
Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,  
Reign o’er the land, and rob the blighted rye;  
There thistles spread their thorny arms afar,  
And to the ragged infant threaten war.”

—*The Village*.

The mingled simplicity and fierceness, and the strange lyrical melody and mysticism, of the poet-artist William Blake (1757–1827) give him a unique place among the poets of the eighteenth century. He was born, the son of a poor hosier, in London; was slightly and irregularly educated, and put apprentice to an en-

graver at an early age. He was already writing poetry. As a student at the Royal Academy he made the acquaintance of Flaxman and Fuseli, both of whom were impressed with the originality of his genius. At the age of twenty-five he married an illiterate but affectionate and loyal woman of his own rank, and opened a shop as an engraver and designer. Next year he published his *Poetical Sketches*, but the small book failed to attract any notice. His circumstances at this time were humble in the extreme; but he found consolation in hope and faith, which never failed him, and in mysterious communion with an invisible world. The death of a favorite brother increased his habit of withdrawing from practical life and living in a state of imaginative seclusion. Here he found the strange inspirations which guided both his pen and his pencil. It was in obedience to the fancied advice of his brother's spirit that he brought out, in 1789, his *Songs of Innocence*—not only writing and illustrating, but, with his own hands, printing and engraving the entire edition. These *Songs* are like the joyful utterance of free and fearless childhood. The *Songs of Experience*, published in 1794, are the contrast; they treat with the same strange lyrical power of the anomalies and dreadful mysteries of life. *The Lamb* is the typical poem in the former, *The Tiger* in the latter, collection. The enigmatical, if not unintelligible, *Book of Thel*, and *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, came between. Like these, *Urizen*, published in 1800, is only a name. The great feature of Blake's poetry is his infinitely tender love for children and animals, and his hatred of cruelty; his expression recalls the style of Herrick and the lyrical utterance of Shakespeare. Probably the most regular and coherent of his poems, certainly not the least melodious, is his lament *To the Muses*:

“Whether on Ida's shady brow,  
Or in the chambers of the East,  
The chambers of the sun, that now  
From ancient melody have ceased;

“Whether in heaven ye wander fair,  
Or the green corners of the earth,  
Or the blue regions of the air  
Where the melodious winds have birth;

“Whether on crystal rocks ye rove  
Beneath the bosom of the sea,  
Wandering in many a coral grove,  
Fair Nine! forsaking Poesy;

"How have you left the ancient love  
 That bards of old enjoyed in you !  
 The languid strings do scarcely move,  
 The sound is forced, the notes are few !"  
 —*To the Muses.*

Of small poets belonging to the period the following may be named :

**Sir William Davenant**, Shakespeare's godson, an unwearied writer of poor dramas, and author of a collection of verses entitled *Madagascar*, and an epic fragment in rhyme called *Gondibert*.

**Wentworth Dillon, Earl of Roscommon**, author of a short didactic *Essay on Translated Verse*, in heroic couplets.

**Charles Sackville, Earl of Dorset**, the patron and friend of Dryden and Prior, and author of some graceful enough lyrics.

**Thomas Shadwell**, satirized as Macflecknoe by Dryden, who describes him as "never deviating into sense", he wrote "inoffensive" satires, and nearly a score of rather dull plays, of which Dryden characterized the tragedies as "giving smiles" and the comedies "sleep."

**John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester**, a vicious man and a malignant enemy—witness his brutal treatment of Dryden—but as witty as he was wicked, and the author of perhaps the finest lyrics of the time of Charles II.

**Charles Montague, Earl of Halifax**, who wrote in conjunction with Prior *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse* in ridicule of Dryden's *Lion and Panther*, but better known as a patron of letters and the friend of Addison ; it was to him that Addison sent the *Letter from Italy*.

**Sir Samuel Garth**, a London physician, author of a clever mock-heroic poem, *The Dispensary* ; and *Claremont*, a descriptive piece on the model of *Cooper's Hill*.

**Ambrose Philips**, the framer of certain "namby-pamby" odes in what Pope contemptuously called "the infantile style"; author also of the tragedy *The Distressed Mother*.

**John Philips**, the daring and successful parodist of the style of *Paradise Lost*, in a humorous mock-heroic, *The Splendid Shilling* ; author also of a long poem on *Cider*, a kind of Georgic of apple-orchards.

**Thomas Tickell**, a scholar, essayist of some repute, and the intimate friend of Addison, whose death he lamented in an Elegy of sincere pathos.

**William Somerville**, an admirer of Addison and an imitator of Thomson, known for his descriptive poem of *The Chace*.

**Matthew Green**, author of *The Spleen*, a poem in octosyllabics,

praised by Gray, and recommending a quiet country life as a cure for low spirits.

**Richard Savage**, author of *The Wanderer*, in heroics, but better known by Johnson's biography of him.

**David Malloch**, or **Mallet** as he called himself to suit the Southron tongue, now remembered for his ballad of *William and Margaret*, and a lyric, *The Birks of Invermay*.

**Robert Blair**, a Scottish minister, author of a gloomy but original poem entitled *The Grave*.

**John Dyer**, a native of Wales, whose rhyming poem, *Grongar Hill*, was published in the same year as Thomson's *Winter*; he is also known for a didactic poem in blank-verse called *The Fleece*, which treats of

"The care of sheep, the labours of the loom."

**John Armstrong**, a London physician, the friend and fellow-countryman of Thomson, author of *The Art of Preserving Health*.

**Richard Glover**, author of an epic of *Leonidas* and the ballad of *Admiral Hosier's Ghost*.

**William Shenstone**, of the Leasowes, author of *Elegies* and *The Schoolmistress*—the latter a short but pretty successful effort in the Spenserian measure, written about the same time as *The Castle of Indolence*.

**Mark Akenside**, a learned physician, and fellow of the Royal Society, author of *The Pleasures of Imagination*.

**William Falconer**, a Scottish sailor, belonging to Edinburgh, author of *The Shipwreck*, a realistic poem of the sea, in which nautical phrases are freely used.

**Charles Churchill**, a coarse, violent, and virulent satirist, author of *Gotham*.

**Dr. Erasmus Darwin**, author of *The Loves of the Plants* (published in 1789), afterwards expanded into a scientific treatise in very correct verse of the merely artificial kind, and entitled *The Botanic Garden*.

**James Beattie**, author of *The Minstrel*, written in the Spenserian measure.

**James Macpherson**, the translator, if not the inventor, of Ossian.

**Michael Bruce**, a young Scottish poet, author of *Paraphrases*, and perhaps (for it is disputed) the well-known *Ode to the Cuckoo*.

**Robert Fergusson**, who wrote in the Scottish dialect, and had great influence on Burns.

**Thomas Chatterton**, "the marvellous boy, the sleepless soul that perished in his pride," the inventor of the Rowley Poems, *Ælla*, *The Bristowe Tragedie*, etc.

## DRAMATISTS

Two centuries lie between Massinger, the last of the Elizabethan writers of tragedy, and Shelley, the author of *The Cenci*, yet in the interval there is only one great tragic dramatist, **Thomas Otway** (1651–1685). He succeeded where even Dryden failed. Otway was the son of a Sussex clergyman, and was educated first at Winchester, and finally at Oxford, but, becoming impatient of study, left Christ Church without finishing his course. Like Shakespeare and Ben Jonson before him, his first ambition was to be an actor; but breaking down on his first appearance, he went back to Oxford, and, as his thoughts were still on the theatre, began presently to turn his attention to dramatic composition. In his twenty-fifth year he produced *Alcibiades*, a tragedy which, though a poor play, gained some notice from the clever acting of Betterton and Mrs. Barry, who took the principal parts. Otway's next tragedy, *Don Carlos*, was in heroics, and seems to have been immensely popular beyond its deserts. Meanwhile he had fallen desperately in love with Mrs. Barry, and had incurred the rivalry of the Earl of Rochester. To break off the attachment he fled from London, and now he appears in the character of a soldier with a cornet's commission in a Flanders regiment. A single campaign satisfied his military ardor, and he returned—in some disgrace it is said—to London and the theatre. In 1680 he produced *The Orphan*, which, with the more famous *Venice Preserved* in 1682, now constitutes his claim to our regard. His fame rests upon them. In both he returned to blank-verse. These powerful domestic tragedies, dealing mainly with middle-class life, kept the stage for nearly a century; they were London favorites equally with Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Othello* when Thomson was writing *The Seasons*, and were still acted in the last years of Johnson. Indelicacy of plot has now banished *The Orphan* from the stage, but *Venice Preserved* is still occasionally acted. It is the emotion of pity to which Otway appeals in both, and



few scenes out of Shakespeare are more tenderly drawn than those which present the sorrows of Monimia in the one tragedy and Belvidera in the other. *Venice Preserved* is the story of Belvidera, a Venetian senator's daughter, who marries Jaffier, a weak but affectionate adventurer, and is disowned by her father. Jaffier, reduced to desperation by poverty, is drawn by his friend Pierre into a plot to kill the senators of Venice and bring about a revolution in the State. In a moment of weakness Jaffier reveals the conspiracy to his wife, who, horrified at the plot, warns her father, and is promised the safety of her husband. The conspirators are apprehended, and on the scaffold Jaffier first stabs Pierre to save him from the torture of the wheel, and immediately afterwards stabs himself. Belvidera's miseries drive her mad. A feature of the art of Otway is the absence of rant; the language is clear and forcible, and the lines vibrate with genuine human passion.

Otway's life was dissipated, and shortened by excess and privation. At last he fell into a condition of utter destitution and hopelessness. Different accounts are given of the immediate cause of his death; the one that has most taken the popular imagination is to the effect that when starving he ate so ravenously a piece of bread given him in the street by the hand of charity that he choked on the first mouthful. He was only thirty-four.

If tragedy languished after the Elizabethan age, comedy flourished in a new development, and its wittiest exponent was **William Congreve** (1670-1729). He belongs to the school of Etherege, who, inspired by Molière, founded our modern comedy at the time of the Restoration; and among his later followers in the comedy of contemporary manners are Goldsmith and Sheridan. The son of a wandering Cavalier of good family, Congreve was born in Yorkshire not far from the town of Leeds, but his childhood and youth were passed in Ireland. He was educated at Kilkenny School and Dublin University, where he made scholarly acquaintance with the Latin and Greek classics. At twenty he was

in London, a student of the Middle Temple, but not greatly caring for the profession of law. He had been secretly smitten with the charms of the theatre, and early began to write for the stage. He had just attained his majority when *The Old Bachelor* was ready, though not acted till two years later. He followed it up immediately with *The Double Dealer*, which, though at first less popular, caught the ear of the public at last on the unusual warmth of Dryden's approbation. Dryden declared that a new and better Shakespeare had appeared, and in his verdict the poets and critics of the day seem to have joined. Congreve had now every inducement to write, and in 1695 he was ready with a masterpiece, *Love for Love*, which established his fame. In this play the British sailor, in the character of Ben Legend, makes his appearance on the modern stage for the first time. Congreve now tried his hand at tragedy, and brought out *The Mourning Bride* in 1697. Its success was beyond precedent. It was even more successful than *Love for Love*. Yet it is a very poor affair, written in stilted blank-verse, and has long lain unacted and unread. It opens, however, with a line which is still quoted, "Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast." All Congreve's four comedies are objectionable for their immorality; his one tragedy, which escapes the charge, is objectionable for its dulness. Its lines want variety, and its sentiment passion. A feature of the tragedy is the consolation of Almeria after all her woes. It was while Congreve was at the height of his fame that the Rev. Jeremy Collier published (1693) his *Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*. The book was a heroic and successful attack, before which Dryden fled discomfited, and to which Congreve opposed an angry and futile resistance. Congreve returned to comedy in his next play, *The Way of the World*, produced in 1700. Little inferior to *Love for Love*, it was rather a failure; and, chilled by the coldness of its reception, smarting also from the castigation of Collier, Congreve vowed at the age of thirty to write no more for the stage, and he kept his vow. But the fame he had acquired was sufficient to secure for

him for the remaining twenty-eight years of his life a high and respected place in the world of letters. Pope paid him a great compliment by dedicating the *Iliad* to him.

At this time he was the darling of society. Voltaire paid him the honor of a visit, and administered at the same time a smart rebuke to his vanity for posing as a man of fashion and affecting to despise literary fame. "It was only for your literary fame," said Voltaire, "that I had the curiosity to see you, and the wish to know you." He was a favorite with ministers on both sides of politics. His first place, given him on the production of his first play, was a commissionership for the licensing of hackney-coaches; and his last, and most lucrative, worth £1200 a year, was the secretaryship of the Island of Jamaica, a post to which he was appointed on the accession of George I. Gout and blindness, brought on by intemperate habits, were the afflictions of his middle age and later life; and he became a permanent guest in the household of the eccentric Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough. To her, who had already vast wealth, he left the bulk of his fortune, with only a trifling legacy to Mrs. Bracegirdle, the famous actress, to whom he should have left all. Her grace bought a superb diamond necklace with Congreve's thousands, and wore it for his sake. She showed her regard in other ways: "It is said that she had a statue of him in ivory, which moved by clockwork, and was placed daily at her table; that she had a wax doll made in imitation of him, and that the feet of the doll were regularly blistered and anointed by the doctors, as poor Congreve's feet had been when he suffered from the gout."

The art of Congreve shows to brilliant advantage in dialogue. Here he is easy, bright, and well-bred to the last degree. So superabundant is his wit that it enters the conversation of all his characters; his footmen and maids talk with as much point and polish as their masters and mistresses. His plots are intricate and sometimes confusing, and the action lingers and lags in deference to the dialogue. It is vain to accuse his lovers of insincerity; they are as he

found them in the fashionable world of his day. His characters are generally clear-drawn and lifelike; but, "judged morally," every one of them is, in the language of Charles Lamb, "alike essentially vain and worthless."

Less witty, but scarcely less popular, and with more heart than Congreve, was **George Farquhar** (1678-1707), the last of the brilliant band sometimes known as the Orange dramatists. The son of a clergyman, and born at Londonderry, Farquhar was a student at Trinity College when an early ambition to shine as an actor drove him on the Dublin stage. Here he had the misfortune to wound a fellow-actor by using a sword for a foil in a fencing scene in one of Dryden's heroic plays. The accident seems to have made him renounce a player's life, and we next hear of him as an officer in the army who by-and-by attains the rank of captain. He had not, however, broken with the theatre. In his twentieth year we find him in London writing comedies, and drawing upon his experience of military life from the first. *Love and a Bottle* was followed in 1700 by *The Constant Couple*, and its sequel *Sir Harry Wildair*; after these came *The Recruiting Officer* and *The Beaux' Stratagem*, rattling comedies all astir with bustle, adventure, and exuberant animal spirits; and yet the last was composed in six weeks' time, it is said, while he lay on his death-bed, oppressed with personal disappointment and domestic cares. He had sold his commission in order to marry a young lady who, to secure his affections, pretended she was an heiress. On discovering, when his own means were almost exhausted, that she was even poorer than himself, he had the gallantry to conceal his annoyance. He left "two helpless girls" to the care of his friend Wilks, an actor; "look upon them sometimes," he wrote, "and think of their father, who was to the last moment of his life thy friend." He died in his thirtieth year. Captain Plume in *The Recruiting Officer* is believed to be a portrait of himself.

Scarcely less offensive to morality than Congreve, Farquhar has more natural gayety; while his sympathetic

touches and the absence of cynicism give a healthier air to his scenes and characters. His plots are interesting, and his characters drawn with a broad and free hand. Boniface is still the type of a provincial innkeeper, and the humors of recruiting in the bustle of an English market-town on market-day rise at once to the imagination at mention of Sergeant Kite, with his drum and his swagger and his song of *Over the hills and far away*.

#### OTHER DRAMATISTS

Dryden's work as a dramatist has been already considered (p. 152). It is only necessary here to give a connected view of his dramatic industry. He began with an indifferent comedy, *The Wild Gallant*, in 1663; passed on to the heroic drama, in rhyme, which for fourteen years he labored to establish in England, producing, as the most notable examples of their class, *The Indian Queen* (in 1664), *The Indian Emperor*, *Tyrannic Love*, *The Conquest of Granada* (in 1672), and *Aureng-Zebe*; returned to blank-verse by the production of *All for Love, or The World Well Lost*, in 1678, a tragedy which contains his best dramatic work; wrote an amusing comedy, *The Spanish Friar*, in 1681, with which he took temporary farewell of the theatre to turn his attention to satire; and resumed his connection with the stage in the last decade of his life, bringing out *Don Sebastian* and *Amphitryon*, the best of his later plays, in 1690, and *Love Triumphant*, his last and perhaps the weakest of all, in 1694. Altogether Dryden wrote in whole or in part about thirty dramatic pieces. He had no natural instinct for play-writing, and wrote simply because it was fashionable and paid. There is little or no genuine passion in his serious dramas, and he seeks to conceal the want by declamatory rant. It was the labored rhymes and bombastic sentiment of *The Conquest of Granada* which provoked the Duke of Buckingham's clever satirical burlesque of *The Rehearsal*. Dryden's plays, and especially his comedies, lie open to the charge of indecency. When Collier arraigned him in the *Short View*, he owned the justice of the rebuke with frankness and dignity. "If Mr. Collier be my enemy," he wrote, "let him triumph; if he be my friend, he will be glad of my repentance."

William Wycherley (1640-1715), one of the handsomest and most profligate men of his time, was educated in France and at Oxford, studied law at the Temple, and became a distinguished courtier and guardsman of Charles II. He wrote, in the *Comedy*

of *Manners*, four pieces in all, which were produced in the interval between 1672 and 1675. They are grossly indelicate, but maintain their place in the history of modern comedy for wit and vivacity of dialogue, and for pungency and satirical remark. *The Country Wife* and *The Plain Dealer* are the last and most famous of the four. A Roman Catholic in his youth, he reverted to the Romish faith after a slight acquaintance with Protestantism, and was pensioned by James II. His old age was marked by a short-lived friendship for young Pope, and disgraced by the publication of an unpoetical and immoral miscellany of verse.

Equally licentious as a writer, but with less cynicism and as much knowledge of the ways of the world, was **John Vanbrugh** (1672–1726). Some reports make the Bastille the place of his birth. It is at least certain that he lived in France in his youth. He wrote ten comedies, beginning in 1697 with two, *The Relapse* and *The Provoked Wife*, which brought him both fame and fortune at once. *The Confederacy*, produced in 1705, is probably his best and most amusing play. Vanbrugh was an architect by profession, and the designer of Blenheim House, the nation's gift to the Duke of Marlborough. He was a favorite of Queen Anne, and was knighted by George I., who made him controller of the royal works. Vanbrugh wrote as solidly and carefully as he built; there is much variety in his scenes; and, though coarse, he is at least a faithful transcriber of those phases of life and character which he chose to represent. Like Congreve, he had the imprudence to reply to Jeremy Collier's famous attack, for it was impossible that he could refute the charge of the *Short View*

To the list of the earlier and later Restoration dramatists belong also the following writers :

**Sir George Etherege**, who introduced the modern comedy into England by the production of *The Comical Revenge* in 1664; he was author also of *The Man of Mode* (1676).

**Mrs. Ayfara**, or **Aphra Behn**, the Astræa of Pope's satire, who wrote nearly a score of plays, all coarse, the most popular (and not the least vicious) of which was *The Forced Marriage*; she was the first Englishwoman to live by her writings.

**Nat Lee**, a writer of wild tragedy "in Ercles' vein," the best of which, *Lucius Junius Brutus*, appeared in 1681; Lee became insane.

**Thomas Southerne**, a writer of sentimental tragedy of the school of Otway, and like him singularly free from rant; his best plays are *The Fatal Marriage* and *Oroonoko*—the latter a dramatic denunciation of the slave-trade; he lived to an advanced age—from 1659 to 1746.



Colley Cibber, the author of many light plays, comparatively pure, of which *The Careless Husband*, produced in 1704, and *The Non-Juror*, in 1717, are the best.

Nicholas Rowe, a writer of pathetic tragedy, of which *The Fair Penitent*, produced in 1703, and *Jane Shore*, in 1713, are his best specimens.

Of the eighteenth-century dramatists none attained to real excellence in tragedy. They were at best rhetorical rather than impassioned. Among them are Addison, whose *Cato* was acted in 1713; Young, whose *Busiris* and *The Revenge* appeared in 1719; Thomson, who, beginning with *Sophonisba* in 1729, wrote also *Agamemnon*, *Tancred and Sigismundu*, a heavy play but his best, and *Coriolanus*, acted the year after his death; Johnson, whose *Irene* appeared also in 1749; and John Home, whose *Douglas*, in 1756, was for a time exceedingly popular.

Steele, author of *The Funeral, or Grief à la Mode* (acted in 1702), and *The Conscious Lovers* (acted in 1722); and George Colman, who in conjunction with Garrick brought out *The Clandestine Marriage* in 1766—are, with Goldsmith and Sheridan, the best-known writers of comedy.

Goldsmith was forty when his first comedy, *The Good-Natured Man*, appeared in 1768. Much more successful, and still very popular, was *She Stoops to Conquer, or The Mistakes of a Night*, first performed in 1773. The plot was suggested by a ludicrous incident of the author's own early life—the blunder, namely, of taking a private mansion for an inn. With variety of scene, character, and situation; sprightly and humorous dialogue; an easy, graceful style; and an amusing plot—*She Stoops to Conquer* has all the requisites, as Johnson said, of attaining the great end of comedy—making an audience merry. In its moral purity the comedy of Goldsmith presents a great contrast to that of Congreve; if it has less wit it has more humor, and the humor is wholesome and kindly.

Less easy and graceful than Goldsmith's, but with wit that sparkled more brightly and more continuously, was the comic genius of his countryman, Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816). He was born in Dublin, and educated at Harrow, where he gave no promise of future distinction. Bred to no profession, he turned to literature, and began an unexpectedly brilliant career with *The Rivals* in 1775. Two years later he brought out at Drury Lane his great comedy, *The School for Scandal*, which took at first, and has never ceased to be effective. It is the wittiest and cleverest play of recent times. *The Critic*, a clever farcical piece in the style of *The Rehearsal*, came later. He was as entertaining with his tongue as with his pen, and became a prime favorite

with Fox and the Prince Regent. In 1780 he began his political career as M.P. for Stafford, attached himself to the Whig party, and distinguished himself by an eloquent speech against Warren Hastings. Always improvident, he fell latterly into debt and destitution. His last contributions to the stage were adaptations from the German.

## ESSAYISTS AND CRITICS

The merit of founding the English literary magazine, which is such a pronounced feature of our current literature, is usually given to **Richard Steele** (1672–1729); but it is only fair to Defoe to notice that his *Review* had the start of *The Tatler* by five years, and held its place for ten. *The Review*, however, which was essentially, though not exclusively, a political journal, had nothing like the popularity or the influence of the periodical essays of Steele. To him, fairly enough, is due the credit of establishing the literary periodical. Steele was born, partly of English, partly of Irish parentage, in Dublin, and was educated at the Charterhouse and Oxford. At both these places he shared the intimate friendship of Addison, though the companions were of different colleges, Steele being first of Christ Church, and afterwards of Merton. Impatient of the quiet monotony of study, Steele broke away from Oxford in 1695 to become a trooper in the Life Guards. In a few years he had raised himself to the rank of captain, and acquired a name for dashing and dissolute gayety. In a fit of pious reflection he produced *The Christian Hero*, and being in danger of losing his character for good-fellowship with his brother officers by the publication of so serious a book, hastened to recover their good graces by writing the same year (1701) his comedy of *The Funeral, or Grief à la Mode*. It was successful on the stage, and he wrote other two, *The Lying Lover* and *The Tender Husband*—both of which were too moral for the age, and failed.

In 1707 he received the appointment of gazetteer for the Whig government; and the post giving him early access to foreign intelligence, he conceived the idea of utilizing his

position by supplying the town with news. Accordingly the first number of *The Tatler* appeared in April, 1709. It was not intended, however, to be a mere newspaper; its scope, as originally planned, may be gathered from Steele's prospectus: "All accounts of gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment shall be under the article of White's Chocolate House; poetry under that of Wills' Coffee House; learning under the title of Grecian; foreign and domestic news you will have from St. James's Coffee House; and what else I shall on any other subject offer shall be dated from my own apartment." Politics were soon gradually dropped, and it ran successfully for nearly two years as the vehicle of town gossip or tattle. Steele himself was the chief writer; but Addison also contributed in the proportion of one article to about four of Steele's. But the idea had so captivated the heart of Addison that when, on the 1st of March, 1711, the more famous *Spectator* was begun, he became the chief contributor, and actually wrote the half of its five hundred and fifty odd numbers. Steele's contributions comprised almost the other half. *The Spectator*, while having almost the same object as *The Tatler*, the entertainment of the town by means of short essays on life and manners, took a higher tone, and was conducted on a more definite plan. It professed to contain the adventures and reflections of an imaginary club, of which Mr. Spectator is the central figure, and Sir Roger de Coverley, Sir Andrew Freeport, Captain Sentry, Will Honeycomb, and Will Wimble more or less companion members, each representing a different interest. *The Tatler* had been published thrice a week; *The Spectator* was a daily issue. Its effect in purifying the character and improving the manners of the age can hardly be overestimated. While these periodicals show Steele's interest in the cause of public morality, his Letters reveal his own private life. They are about 400 in number, and were written to his wife, Mary Scurlock, a Welsh heiress whom he married in 1707, and who is variously addressed as "Adorable Molly," "Dearest Prue," and "Dearest Being on Earth." They were private letters which found their way to the pub-

lic some sixty years after Steele's death; and they afford us the most trustworthy evidence of his character. They show him to be honest, warm-hearted, and impulsive, continually slipping into acts of imprudence and folly, and continually vowing amendment.

After the stoppage of *The Spectator* in December, 1712, a succession of short-lived periodicals was from time to time projected by Steele, comprising *The Guardian*, started in March, 1713; *The Englishman*, almost wholly political; *The Lover*, *The Reader*, *The Theatre*, and *The Spinster*. While *The Guardian* was running its course Steele got caught in the meshes of politics, and, leaving the journal to the conduct of Addison and Berkeley, entered Parliament, became polemical, earned the enmity of Swift, and was ejected from the House of Commons in 1714 for his pamphlet of *The Crisis*. In 1715, on the accession of George I., the Whigs got into power, and Steele's day of political reward arrived. He was knighted, re-entered Parliament, and received the appointment of supervisor of Drury Lane. Greater honors came to Addison; and the friends, whom literature had united in closer bonds, were now to be separated by political jealousies. On the death of Addison in 1719 Steele's generous heart smote him for his part in the estrangement, and he bitterly expressed regret for the cause of it. He did nothing of literary note after Addison's death, except to produce, in 1722, after an absence from the stage of seventeen years, his fourth and best comedy, *The Conscious Lovers*. His health had been giving way; his wife was dead; his affairs were in confusion. In 1723 he retired from London to Wales, where he spent in obscurity the last six years of his life.

The best work of Steele is in his Essays, and his chief praise is in the elevating tone of his teaching. He brought back decency to the comic drama, and in his periodicals he set himself the task of improving the morals and manners of society. His style is natural and lively, less graceful than Addison's, and his taste is less refined; but he is his equal in inventiveness and in knowledge of the world. The concep-

tion of the character of Sir Roger de Coverley was Steele's; but the creation of it is the work of Addison. Steele's esteem for women, and his sympathy with children are beautiful traits in his character; it was he who said of Lady Elizabeth Hastings that "to love her was a liberal education."

The finest prose writer of the eighteenth century was **Joseph Addison** (1672-1719). His style was believed to have reached perfection; and Johnson declared that if any one was ambitious of writing well, he could not do better than give his days and nights to the study of Addison. He was the junior by some six weeks of his school friend and lifelong associate, Richard Steele. Born in the rectory at Milston, near Amesbury in Wiltshire, he was educated at Lichfield Grammar School, the Charterhouse, and Oxford. He was a student of Magdalen College, where he distinguished himself for classical scholarship, and became a fellow of his college at the age of twenty-six. He had already made some name in academical circles for English verse, in the form of translations and addresses. Through Dryden, of whom he was a professed admirer, he made acquaintance with influential politicians, and was pensioned by Lord Somers and Charles Montague (afterwards Lord Halifax), and sent to the Continent to gain such familiarity with foreign languages and manners as would qualify him for public service in the Whig interest. He was abroad nearly four years in all, and visited France, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, and Holland. In the interval of his absence he wrote the *Letter from Italy*, and the greater part of a tragedy on *Cato*. The death of King William recalled him to England in 1703, to find his father dead, his friends out of office, and his pension stopped. He had now only his fellowship and his abilities to trust to.

In 1704 he was surprised in his obscure lodging, "up three shabby pair of stairs in the Haymarket," by a visit from a government emissary to ask him for a poem on the victory of Blenheim. Addison caught the golden opportu-

nity, and *The Campaign* (1705) was the basis of his fortunes. He was appointed under-secretary of state, and entered Parliament as member for Malmesbury, a constituency he continued to represent till his death. In 1709, being then thirty-seven years of age, he went to Ireland as chief secretary to the lord lieutenant; and in the same year began his connection with the periodical press of Steele. He was Steele's chief support in *The Tatler*, and was the mainstay of *The Spectator*. Like Steele, he did his best work in literature for the periodical essay. Among his friends for a short time were Swift and Pope, and when *Cato* was acted in 1713 Pope contributed the prologue. This rather frigid tragedy was believed by his contemporaries to be his masterpiece, and it had a phenomenal success.

Addison was now at the height of his fame. He was also wealthy and the possessor of the estate of Bilton, near Rugby, which he had bought for £10,000, saved partly from his lucrative offices in the government service, but mainly from the earnings of his pen. 1716 found him editor of *The Freeholder*, a periodical of his own, dedicated to the cause of the Hanoverian succession; and in the same year he married the Dowager Countess of Warwick. Next year he attained the high office of secretary of state in the ministry of the Earl of Sunderland. This appointment asthma and dropsy, brought on by over-indulgence in wine, forced him to resign within a few months. His estrangement from Swift dates from 1710, when Swift went over to the Tories; from Pope, who libelled him as Atticus, from 1715, when he expressed a preference for Tickell's *Homer* to Pope's; from Steele, who opposed the Peerage bill while his friend supported it, from a few months before his death in 1719.

Addison's charm is in his style, and his merit in his morality. He was the first to enliven morality with wit, and temper wit with morality. He is, however, less remarkable for what he says than how he says it; his manner is of a superior quality to his matter. The most conspicuous qualities of his manner are its lightness, brightness, and air of good-breeding. This is not a natural result, but the at-



tainment of an elaborate art which tries all things, rejecting and selecting till a definite end is gained. It is the triumph of art to conceal itself, and hence arises the peculiarity of the style of Addison, that while it seems to be the most natural style in the world, it is the most difficult to imitate perfectly. Pope spent no more care in choosing his words and balancing his numbers than Addison in the construction of his clear, unencumbered, and harmonious prose sentences. A good short specimen of the classical style and philosophical tendency of Addison will be found in his *Vision of Mirza*. But the series of essays in which he describes Sir Roger de Coverley and his friends must always remain his masterpiece.

The greatest force in letters of last century was **Samuel Johnson** (1709-1784), critic and moralist. He is little if at all read now, but the influence of his character lives immortal in his friend Boswell's *Biography*. He was born at Lichfield, where his father was a bookseller. At eighteen he was sent to Pembroke College, Oxford; but was obliged through poverty to leave before taking a degree. On the death of his father he was thrown for a livelihood on his own resources. He tried tutoring, literary hackwork at Birmingham, and school-keeping near Lichfield, and then, in company with Garrick, who had been one of his three pupils, he came up to London in 1737 to seek his fortune. The capital of the adventurers amounted in money to only fourpence, and Johnson was already married. Johnson found employment on Edward Cave's periodical *The Gentleman's Magazine*, but both he and his companion (whose talents were for the stage) had a sore struggle to win their way. Fortune came first to Garrick; she came late but at last to Johnson also. His triumph was the well-earned result of about twenty-five years' hard and incessant toil, dating from his arrival in London. His work included two rhymed satires in imitation of Juvenal; the earlier, *London*, published in 1738—the later and best, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, in 1749. In 1744 appeared his *Life of Savage*, an admi-

rable biography which brought his name as a writer of prose prominently before the public at a time when good biography was rare. It was in 1747 that he projected his famous *Dictionary of the English Language*, and, after eight years' laboriously silent work, it was published in 1755. It was in connection with its publication that he wrote the *Letter to Lord Chesterfield*, a singularly dignified piece of English prose, which lifted the literary life out of the degrading bondage of patronage. In 1749 his drama of *Mahomet and Irene* was put on the stage by Garrick, who was now manager of Drury Lane.

Johnson now sought to revive the periodical essay, and began *The Rambler* in 1750. He also wrote for *The Adventurer*, and between 1758 and 1760 contributed a series of essays known as *Idlers* to *The Universal Chronicle*. *The Idlers* are brighter and lighter than *The Ramblers*, but want the easy grace and sparkle of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. It was in the evenings of one week in the spring of 1759 that he composed *Rasselas, or The Prince of Abyssinia*, the immediate object of its publication being to pay his mother's debts and defray the cost of her funeral.

In 1762 he was rewarded with a pension of £300 a year, and being now independent, set himself to enjoy the sweets of social intercourse, for which he had a strong natural liking, by his foundation of the Literary Club. The members included Reynolds, Garrick, Burke, Goldsmith, Boswell, Fox, and other notable men. Here Johnson was in his element. He was the best talker of his age, and shone to more advantage in conversation than in writing. In 1773, at the age of sixty-four, and enjoying better health than was usual to him, he made his memorable journey to the Scottish Highlands and Islands in the company of Boswell; and in the autumn of the following year went on a tour in North Wales. In 1775 Oxford gave him the degree of LL.D., an honor of which he was especially proud. He was seventy years of age when his *Lives of the English Poets* began to be published. He died in his house in Bolt Court in 1784.

Johnson's weighty and impressive style suits well with a

subject of moral grandeur such as not seldom employed his pen; but it grows monotonous, and becomes even ludicrous, when applied on occasions of ordinary or trifling importance. It was to this uniform pomposity of style that Goldsmith alluded when he said that Dr. Johnson would make little fishes talk like whales. But while Johnson's style of writing is overloaded with long words from the Latin, and ponderous with rolling sentences, his speech presented a contrast in pithy and pointed idiomatic Saxon English. He was to his century what Dryden had been to the seventeenth—a literary dictator whose verdict was final. The moral integrity of Johnson gave weight to his decisions.

Best known now for his poetry, **Oliver Goldsmith** (1728-1774) wrote so much and so well in prose of the essay form or style that he properly falls to be considered among the essayists. Even *The Vicar of Wakefield*, usually spoken of as a novel, is as much entitled to be classed among essays as the Sir Roger de Coverley papers of Addison. Despite many faults and frailties of conduct, no author is dearer to the popular heart than Goldsmith.

He was born at Pallas, in Longford, the fifth of a family of eight children, but passed his childhood at Lissoy (the reputed original of sweet Auburn), a village in West Meath. His life was one long series of school-boy escapades and blunders, through which his natural light-heartedness bore him buoyantly along. At school, like his countryman Sheridan, he was regarded by his teachers as little better than a fool. In 1744, being then in his sixteenth year, he was admitted a sizar of Trinity College, Dublin, his father being too poor to afford him the status of a pensioner. He made a very indifferent student, was guilty of several college irregularities, and barely succeeded in taking his B.A. degree. Twice he was on the point of emigrating to America. It was a puzzle to his relatives what to make of him. They proposed the Church, but the bishop to whom he applied for orders rejected him; they proposed law, and he set out

with the money necessary to make a start, but gambled it all away, and came back cheerful and penniless. He was again furnished by his uncle Contarine, and despatched to Edinburgh to try medicine; and now (1752) Ireland fairly got rid of him.

He was hardly two years in Edinburgh—where he made, as before, a very sorry student—when the roving impulse again seized him, and he embarked for Bordeaux. Fortune drove the ship into Newcastle, where he was imprisoned for a Jacobite, and, on being released, he sailed to Holland, and came to Leyden. Here he had not been a year when the old restlessness returned, and he set out on foot to make the tour of Europe. With the Arcadian equipment of a flute, on which he played badly, he traversed Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. The poetry of it all may be seen in *The Traveller*; but the prose of it, which he suppressed, must often have been a bitter experience. Johnson said that he “disputed his passage through Europe”—meaning that he took advantage of the hospitality of those convents and universities which invited scholars to take part in their debates.

He turned up at last in London in 1756, penniless, friendless, without a profession, and with the disadvantages of an Irish accent, a hesitating manner of speech, an insignificant figure, and features rough and scarred with smallpox. His London life, till he became famous, was a struggle for bare liberty to live. He seems to have made many shifts, and to have been once at least on the verge of despair. He tried play-acting, school-teaching, shopkeeping for an apothecary, proof-reading in the printing-office of Richardson the novelist, practising as a doctor on the strength of an apocryphal foreign diploma; and at last, after vainly attempting to pass as a hospital mate at Surgeons’ Hall, settled down to the drudgery of doing hackwork for a succession of rascally booksellers. But even Goldsmith’s hackwork has the merits of a light, graceful style and a genial humor. He wrote for numerous periodicals—among others for *The Monthly Review*, *The Bee*, *The Critical Review*, *The Public*

*Ledger.* To the last-named, beginning early in 1760, he contributed the famous *Chinese Letters*, afterwards published in a book with the title *Letters from a Citizen of the World*. They number twenty-six, and were chiefly intended to show how English manners and institutions strike a stranger. The travelling Chinese philosopher Lien Chi Altangi corresponds from England now with Fum Hoam, now with Hingpo, his countrymen in the East. The description of Beau Tibbs is an excellent specimen of the light and graceful satire of this very diverting book. Its publication in 1762 marks Goldsmith's entrance into literature.

But it was in the year before this, and on the last day of May in that year, that Johnson came to sup with Goldsmith at his lodging in Wine Office Court, Fleet Street. It was a memorable event in the history of Goldsmith, for it brought him the solid friendship of one who, in his own gruff way, stood by ready to give Goldsmith counsel, encouragement, or protection, of one or other of which he was always in need. Another friend not less sincere, and more gentle, he found in Sir Joshua Reynolds. In 1765 Goldsmith, already known as a poet, collected and published his *Miscellaneous Essays*. With each successive original work—*The Vicar of Wakefield* in 1766, the comedy of *The Good-natured Man* in 1768, *The Deserted Village* in 1770, and *She Stoops to Conquer* in 1773—Goldsmith rose more and more into fame. Fortune, too, visited him; but he did not know how to utilize her visits. True, he treated himself to gay clothes—plum-colored coats and breeches of purple satin, handsomer rooms, frequent holidays, with at least one trip to France in the company of the Hornecks and “The Jessamy Bride”; but money could not stay in his pocket: he was the most generous and extravagant of mortals, and he died £2000 in debt.

Goldsmith's original writings are only a fraction of his published work. He was an indefatigable compiler of *Lives and Histories*, of which his *Roman History*, his *History of England*, and *A History of the Earth and Animated Nature*

are the chief. The wonder is that, with so much hackwork continually on hand, he could find time and spirit for original composition. The charm of all Goldsmith's literary work is the easy grace of his pure English style. He was the only one of Johnson's contemporaries—Boswell excepted—to remain uninfluenced by the ponderosity of Johnson's Latin style.

One of the greatest masters of English prose, **Edmund Burke** (1729–1797), was the son of a Dublin attorney, and was educated with a view to the English bar. At Trinity College, Dublin, however, he read, on lines of his own, poetry, philosophy, rhetoric, and history; and these early studies determined and directed his career. The poetical spirit remained with him to the end of life, and thrills through his prose; but it was only while an undergraduate that he practised verse, doing a very clever translation of Virgil's Second Georgic. At the age of twenty-one he came over to London, and was entered a student of the Middle Temple, but soon showed distaste of the legal profession, and began to write. There is some obscurity about this part of his life; he tells us that he was "sometimes in London, sometimes in remote parts of the country, sometimes in France." At last in 1756 he settled down into matrimony and authorship. His chief publication of that year was the essay entitled *An Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. It may be regarded as the first notable piece of art criticism in our language—the next in time and importance being Reynolds's *Discourses on Painting*. This essay made Burke famous, and won for him the friendship and social fellowship of Johnson, Reynolds, Goldsmith, and other famous men of the age. With these men he founded the Literary Club, and was one of the most enthusiastic members—for Burke no less than Johnson was fond of social converse; the two were the best talkers of their day, and it was said that Burke only could keep the ball going with Johnson. In 1759 Burke was editing *The Annual Register*.



His political career is inextricably interwoven with his literary career, and dominates it. It begins in 1761, when he became private secretary to the Secretary for Ireland. By-and-by he entered Parliament, where for the long period of nearly thirty years he took an active and mostly an independent part in current politics. He was one of the leading statesmen of his time, and one of the most distinguished orators that ever addressed a British Parliament. He took Cicero for his model, and Goldsmith said of his method that he wound into his subject like a serpent. Yet latterly he spoke to an inattentive or empty House—he dazzled rather than convinced. He filled high office, was paymaster of the forces under two administrations, and did great service on the side of justice and freedom—advocated the abolition of slavery, the independence of parliamentary representatives, the claims of Roman Catholics, humanity to India, and a policy of conciliation towards the American colonies before the great revolt of 1775. His speech on American conciliation is memorable for having called forth Johnson's reply of *Taxation No Tyranny*. His most brilliant appearance as an orator was in the trial of Warren Hastings. He opened the case (February, 1788) against the Governor of India in a speech which lasted four days, and he closed it, after the trial had run for nine years, in a speech of nine days' duration. A witness of the scene, Fanny Burney the novelist, whose sympathies were all for Hastings, has described the effect on herself of Burke's powerful attack: "He interested, he engaged, he at last overpowered me; I felt my cause lost. I could hardly keep in my seat. My eyes dreaded a single glance towards a man so accused as Mr. Hastings; I wanted to sink on the floor, that they might be saved so painful a sight. I had no hope he could clear himself; not another wish in his favour remained."

The best literary prose of Burke was the product of the last seven years of his life: it lifts him to a level with Gibbon. Excellent specimens of it are to be found in his *Reflection on the French Revolution*, a masterpiece of passion-

ately sincere and sublime eloquence; and in his *Letter to a Noble Lord* (1796), in defence of his pension. The noble lord was the Duke of Bedford, whose own pensions for infinitely less service greatly exceeded Burke's, and whom on that account he calls "leviathan among all the creatures of the Crown."

Burke's power lay in invective and description. His genius is essentially serious, lofty, and commanding. He has Milton's deficiency of humor, and he has no pathos. His pomp and power of language are worthy to be named alongside of Gibbon's; yet his literary style gives him less distinction than his range of thought as a philosopher, or his insight and services as a statesman.

#### OTHER ESSAYISTS AND CRITICS

**Cowley** is now read rather for his prose than for his verse, and the charm lies in his small volume of eleven Essays. They offer such a contrast to his poetry, in point of style, that Johnson's criticism of them is altogether justified: "No author ever kept his verse and his prose at a greater distance from each other. His thoughts are natural, and his style has a smooth and placid equality. . . . Nothing is far-sought or hard-laboured; but all is easy without feebleness, and familiar without grossness." They win at once the reader's admiration for the writer, and his affection for the man. Among other subjects, they treat, with all the freshness of Montaigne, of Himself, the Garden, Solitude, the Shortness of Life and Uncertainty of Riches, and the Dangers of an Honest Man in much Company. In point and suggestiveness of observation they remind one of the Essays of Bacon.

**Sir William Temple** (1628-1699), to whom Swift in the earlier part of his life acted as amanuensis at Moor Park, was probably the most refined writer of prose of the seventeenth century. He is readable, not for his matter, but entirely for the lucidity, ease, and grace of his manner. In this respect he is an earlier Addison. His best literary work is comprised in a volume of four Essays, published in 1692, of which the best are *On Gardens* and *On Poetry*.

**Dryden's** prose reflects the best qualities of his verse. He is strong, straightforward, and idiomatic beyond any writer of his century. Yet he is more readable for his matter than for his style. His subject is chiefly criticism, and he is to be regarded as

the first in time of English literary critics. His prose work takes the form, for the most part, of prefaces to his plays and poems. The most notable of these are his *Essay on Heroic Plays*, prefixed to *The Conquest of Granada* (1672), his preface to *All for Love* (1678), and his preface to *The Fables* (1700). But the best known is the *Essay* (in dialogue form) *on Dramatic Poetry*, published separately in 1667.

**Richard Bentley** (1662-1742), Master of Trinity, was the foremost classical scholar and critic of his time. Single-handed against a host of advocates, including Temple, Swift, and Atterbury, he demolished the once famous *Letters of Phalaris*, which he proved to be spurious, in a style of controversy marked by rough, overbearing, irresistible strength of language and logic.

**Dr. John Arbuthnot** (1667-1735), a Scottish physician settled in London, the friend and intimate associate of Pope, Gay, and Swift, and an active member of the Scribblerus Club, is memorable as the principal author of the *Memoirs of Martinus Scribblerus*, more especially as the writer of *The History of John Bull*. The latter would never have been written if the *Tale of a Tub* had not preceded it; indeed, Arbuthnot's literary genius seems to have been inspired by Swift. *The History of John Bull*, written in ridicule of the great Duke of Marlborough, was at first attributed to Swift, and in this lies its greatest praise.

**Swift**, born in the same year as Arbuthnot, first appeared as an essayist in *A Tale of a Tub*, written in his thirtieth year. *The Battle of the Books* appeared in the following year. Both were first published in 1704. It was of *A Tale of a Tub* that Swift, near the end of his life, is reported to have said, "What a genius I once had!" The title is allegorical; the tub was his own book, which he threw out for the amusement of the whales (the sceptics), in order to save the ship (the Church). In the *Tale*, Peter, Martin, and Jack represent the Church of Rome, the Church of England, and the Presbyterian Church respectively — so called from St. Peter, Martin Luther, and John Calvin. It was this extremely clever but unfortunate book that blasted Swift's hope of preferment. *The Battle of the Books* (the fight is supposed to have taken place in St. James's Library, where Bentley was librarian) is Swift's contribution to the controversy about the *Letters of Phalaris*. In it occurs the famous fable of the Spider and the Bee, the former insect representing modern and the latter ancient learning. In 1704 appeared Swift's *Meditation upon a Broomstick*, in ridicule of the style and manner of Boyle. In 1708 and 1709 appeared, under the assumed name of Bickerstaff, Swift's *Predictions for the Year 1708*, his *Account of Partridge's Death*, and his audacious *Vindication of Isaac Bickerstaff*. They were a practical

joke at the expense of John Partridge, an almanac-maker, upon whom Swift turned, for the amusement of London, the quack's own assumed gift of prophecy. Swift wrote innumerable political tracts and squibs. Most famous of all were his *Drapier's Letters* (1724), written to oppose the introduction of Wood's copper coinage into Ireland. These Letters made Swift immensely popular in Ireland. Swift's power was in satire, and the weapon he used was irony, which he wielded with a grave and merciless mastery.

## NOVELISTS AND NARRATIVE WRITERS

**Daniel Defoe** (1661–1731), usually styled the father of the English novel, was the son of a Dissenting butcher, of Cripplegate, London, and his father had him educated for the Nonconformist Church. But the youth seems to have been born for journalism, and began his course as a political pamphleteer almost on attaining his majority. The course lasted till the accession of George I., and falls to be considered first. It is marked by the production of innumerable articles on subjects of current interest, notably *The True-born Englishman*, a political satire in verse, which gained for its author the favor of King William, and *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, an ironical satire in prose, which was misunderstood by both Churchmen and Nonconformists, and landed its luckless author in the pillory and Newgate. In Newgate, in 1704, he started *The Review*, a periodical on politics and subjects of general interest, issued thrice a week, and memorable as proving the forerunner of the more famous and successful *Tatler* of Steele. On his release Defoe was employed by the government of Queen Anne on a mission to Scotland, to promote the Union. He devoted his journal to the cause, and when the Union was accomplished he wrote its history.

All through this period of political industry Defoe was carrying on some business or other, not one of which was successful. He began by being a soldier in Monmouth's rebellion; then for seven years he dealt in hosiery, till he had amassed a debt of £17,000; after some experience as a clerk, he undertook to manage and then bought a brick and

tile factory at Tilbury, but it was mismanaged during his imprisonment in Newgate, and this venture, too, ended in failure. From all his difficulties Defoe had a trick of escaping by concealing himself.

Prosperity began to shine on Defoe when he turned, at the age of fifty-five, from political to fictional writing. It was in 1719 when his thrilling book of adventure, *Robinson Crusoe*, came out. It was popular from the first. The story of a Scottish seaman, Alexander Selkirk, whom Dampier had left in 1704 on Juan Fernandez, and who stayed on that lonely island of the Pacific for nearly four and a half years without once seeing a human face, had been London talk for some time. Defoe saw the capabilities of Selkirk's story, and proceeded to embellish a narrative with many romantic incidents taken from the marooned seaman's adventures.

Defoe wrote innumerable stories after *Robinson Crusoe*, but never anything nearly so good. Yet with servant-maids and sailors, and people of that class, many of his other narratives were equally popular. It is calculated that Defoe put forth altogether 254 distinct publications. It will be enough to name only a few of these: *The Apparition of Mrs. Veal*, a weirdly circumstantial ghost-story of the daylight; *Captain Jack*, the history of a pickpocket who becomes a virtuous Virginian planter; *Roxana, or the Fortunate Mistress*, and *Her Maid Amy*—the story of a French adventuress; *Moll Flanders*, *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, *History of the Plague*, *Captain Singleton*, the *Political History of the Devil*, etc.

The last years of Defoe's life exhibit him in the enjoyment of wealth, derived from his own writings and a government pension, the possessor of a handsome house and a coach, and the father of three beautiful daughters and two undutiful sons. Yet he died concealed in lodgings at Greenwich, from which circumstance it has been inferred that he either went mad, or had been living beyond his means and felt the old terror of angry creditors.

Clearness, simplicity, and an air of perfect truth secured by exhaustless detail and circumstantiality of statement, are

the qualities of Defoe's narrative style. He has little humor and less pathos, and shows no skill in constructing a plot.

**Jonathan Swift** (1667–1745) shares with Defoe the honor of having founded the great literary institution of the eighteenth century — the English novel. The narrative stories of *Robinson Crusoe* and *Lemuel Gulliver* prepared the way for the elaborately constructed fictions of Richardson and Fielding. Swift is, besides, the most original and powerful prose writer of the first half of last century, as Johnson was the most prominent figure in the literature of the last half. Yet great as were his talents and his reputation, his life was the most unhappy, because the most disappointed, in the whole record of our literary history. Unlike Pope, whose whole soul was in his work for its own sake, Swift had no pure love for literature. All his endeavors to distinguish himself, as he confessed to Bolingbroke, “were only for want of a great title or fortune,” and that he “might be used like a lord.”

He was born of English parents in Dublin a few months after his father's death, and was carried off by his nurse and kept at Whitehaven for three years, while his mother lived dependent on the bounty of her relatives in Leicestershire. At the age of seven he was placed at Kilkenny school, where Congreve was one of his playmates, and remained there till, at the age of fourteen, he was ready to go to Trinity College, Dublin. He proved a refractory, and latterly a riotous, student; and when he left college, in 1688, it was with such a pittance of academical learning as hardly warranted the degree of B.A., granted him by special grace. He had read, however, at his own pleasure, a good deal of history and poetry.

He came home to his mother in Leicestershire, and by-and-by, interest having been made for him with Sir William Temple, a distant relative of his mother, he was received into that gentleman's house of Sheen Park in the capacity of amanuensis. His dependency on Temple, who was long in discovering his value, was irksome to his sensitive and



haughty spirit, and he made various unsuccessful efforts to escape from bondage. He tried to maintain himself in Ireland; he studied hard, and took the M.A. degree at Oxford; he wrote Pindaric Odes, which Dryden, his relative, seeing, declared to be destitute of merit or the promise of it; he took holy orders, and held the living of Kilroot, in County Down. Twice he left the service of Temple, but only to return, on the last occasion driven back by the solitude of Kilroot, and attracted by the society and refinement of Moor Park.

At Moor Park Swift had many advantages, among which were an excellent library, and intercourse with the foremost politicians and scholars of the day. It was at Moor Park he became known to King William, who advised him to be a soldier and promised him advancement. At Moor Park also he became acquainted with Esther Johnson, the "Stella" of his correspondence. His acquaintance with Hester Vanhomrigh (Vanessa) began later—in 1708. It was during his last residence at Moor Park that Swift's literary career began, with the brilliant prose satires, *A Tale of a Tub* and *The Battle of the Books*, both written in 1696-1697. When Temple died in 1699 he left Swift a legacy and the task of editing his MSS.

In 1700 Swift was in Dublin as chaplain to the viceroy, Lord Berkeley, and was presented with various small livings, to one of which, Laracor, he retired, where he was joined by "Stella." In 1701 Swift, then on a visit to London, published his first political pamphlet, written in the Whig interest. During many visits that followed he cultivated the acquaintance of Addison, Gay, and Pope; and was soon, more especially from 1710 to 1713 (as revealed by the *Journal to Stella*), the central figure in both the world of politics and the world of letters in London. Of his many publications written in the reign of Queen Anne may be mentioned the ironical *Argument against Abolishing Christianity* (1708); *Project for the Advancement of Religion* (1709); *The Predictions of Isaac Bickerstaff*, relative to Partridge; a volume of *Miscellanies* (1711) in prose and verse, the verse including

*Baucis and Philemon* in octosyllabics, and a realistic description of a City Shower in heroics.

After the fall, in 1714, of the Tory party, to which, disgusted with his neglect by the Whigs, he had offered the great services of his influence and his pen, Swift saw there was no more room for him in London, or hope of preferment beyond the deanery of St. Patrick's, which he had received from the Tories; and, retiring to Dublin, commenced—as he said—"Irishman for the rest of his life." His chief literary work during his settlement in Ireland was *The Drapier's Letters* (1724) and *Gulliver's Travels* (1726-1727). Before his death, Swift, as he had predicted from a vertigo and deafness which afflicted his youth and increased with his years, went completely mad, and spoke to none for the last three years of his life. In appearance Swift was a tall, strong, dark-complexioned man, with an aquiline nose, and thick eyebrows overarching a pair of flashing blue eyes.

The greatest of his works is the narrative of *Gulliver's Travels*, though his style is seen at its best in *The Battle of the Books* and *A Tale of a Tub*. His definition of a good style was proper words in proper places, and it well describes his own. Whatever he has to say he says swiftly, concisely, and clearly. He was a master of ironical humor. His satire, though fierce, is legitimate till disease affects his brain, when he cherishes a strange and hideous misanthropy, which he expresses with all the force of a powerful and uncleanly imagination. The last part of *Gulliver's Travels* is a foul insult to the whole human race. The other parts, the voyages to Lilliput and Brobdingnag (which satirize the politics and customs of England and Europe), and the voyage to the floating aerial island of Laputa, which ridicules the philosophers, are free of the charge of brutality, but are often offensive to good taste.

The first great English novelist, **Samuel Richardson** (1689-1761), was the son of a Derbyshire joiner, and came up to London at the age of seventeen to learn to be a printer. He was a model apprentice, and when he had fairly started

on a prosperous course of printing on his own account, married his master's daughter, became printer of the Journals of the House of Commons, and ultimately was elected Master of the Stationers' Company. He was turned of fifty when the idea occurred to him of having any higher connection with literature than the merely mechanical one of printing it. *Pamela*, published in 1740, was the outcome of his desire to preserve the happiness and improve the morality of domestic servants by warning them of temptation. It is the story of a serving-girl who, by perseverance in virtue, becomes mistress where she had been maid. The story is told in letters. A far greater success every way was Richardson's next work (1748)—the pathetic and tragic story, also written in the letter form, of a pure and pious young lady, *Clarissa Harlowe*, and her unfortunate persecutor, Robert Lovelace, an admirable representative of the brilliant, but unscrupulous, gay gentleman of the time. Richardson's third novel, *Sir Charles Grandison* (1754), is an elaborate attempt to draw a full-length portrait of the perfect gentleman. The result showed that, while the author was amply possessed of a patient dexterity at unravelling human motives and following the development of human passions, his conception of character was truer to life, and more estimable, on the female than on the male side of humanity. Richardson (described as a plump little man of a melancholy temperament) was a great favorite with the ladies, a coterie of whom consoled him for the affront offered to his moral dignity by Fielding. He tells us himself that from boyhood the society of women gave him most delight, and that next to that was the delight of writing letters. One fault of his novels is their inordinate length—*Clarissa* is in seven volumes. The style, though not without a certain formal regularity, is often prolix beyond endurance, especially in those passages which are not sustained by the interest of the history. The interest is altogether psychological, and is often profound; the moral motive of his novels is beyond question, and on that account they were recommended from the pulpit.

Greater and more popular, and of a healthier if coarser genius than Richardson, was **Henry Fielding** (1707-1754), who may be regarded as the greatest novelist of England. He was born in Somerset of aristocratic connections, and was educated at Eton and Leyden. About the age of twenty he began in London to write for the stage, and before he was thirty had written without much success more than a score of light comic pieces, not one of which is of any interest now. It was evident that playwriting was not his way to fame and fortune, and he returned to his interrupted studies of the law, and was called to the bar in 1740. That very year appeared *Pamela*, which Fielding, disgusted with the virtue of the book and the method of its reward, resolved to burlesque, and accordingly began *The Adventures of Joseph Andrews*. Joseph he pretended to be the brother of Pamela, and intended him for a paragon of the family type. This novel is memorable, among other merits, for the creation of the character of Parson Adams. Fielding's next novel (1743) was *Jonathan Wild the Great*, a story of Newgate and the gallows. In 1749 appeared his masterpiece, *The History of Tom Jones*. The year before, Fielding had been secured in an independence in life through the good offices of Lord Lyttelton, by being made a justice of the peace for Westminster. He was most attentive to his duties as a magistrate, performed as they were under the burden of gout and asthma, and in the weakness of premature physical decay. Fielding in his youth was a tall, strong man, with a vast capacity for enjoyment, but he had undermined his powers by reckless rather than immoral indulgence. In 1751 appeared the tenderest of his four novels, *Amelia*, full of a thoughtfulness which is not found saddening the genial pages of *Tom Jones*. Two years afterwards he went to Bath to recruit; but a longer journey was thought necessary, and he proceeded to Portugal, in hope of being benefited by the voyage and the milder climate. He landed at Lisbon, but only lived two months longer, leaving behind him when he died a journal of the voyage.

Unlike Richardson, Fielding employs the ordinary direct

method of historical narration; he further diversifies his narrative with dialogue and natural descriptions, and presents a truer, robuster, and healthier view of the actual world of his time than Richardson. The plot of *Tom Jones* is admired by all critics for its constructive ability; the style, especially in the chapter that introduces each of the eighteen books, is a model of free, forcible, and suggestive writing; but the morality has been called in question. A blemish in the art of Fielding is his love of episode. *Tom Jones* gives us in Sophia Western one of the most pleasing characters in English fiction; her father, a type of the loud, fox-hunting squire of the time, is no less graphically drawn at full length; while the misadventures of Partridge supply a great deal of the comic mirth of the most genial and truthful novel of last century.

**Laurence Sterne** (1713-1768) holds a unique place among English novelists. His style, the simplicity of which is the result of elaborate art and affectation, is the most marked of any prose writer of the eighteenth century; while his method in the conduct of a story is altogether new and original. He seems to avoid the construction of a plot, yet his characters are so exquisitely drawn and so consistently maintained in themselves and their mutual relations, his endless digressions so illustrative, and his very pauses and abrupt transitions so eloquent, that the little world whose humors and fancies he portrays is suggested with a clearness and picturesqueness not often attained by the most rigid attention to the rules of direct explicit narration.

Sterne was the third child of a wandering army officer, and happened to be born while the regiment to which his father was attached was in barracks at Clonmel. His father was killed in a duel in Jamaica, and Sterne was educated at the expense of a cousin, at Jesus College, Cambridge. Entering the Church, the profession for which he was least fitted, he was presented by a rich uncle to the living of Sutton in Yorkshire, and settled there in 1738. For the next twenty-one years he remained an obscure country par-

son, spending his time in fiddling, farming, and philandering, to the scandalous neglect of his pastoral duties. In his forty-seventh year he suddenly became famous by the publication of *Tristram Shandy*. His dissipation in London, where he was lionized for the last seven years of his life, hastened the ruin of his health, and twice, in 1762 and again in 1765, he sought the benefit of travel in France and Italy. He was in London in 1768, seeing after the publication of *The Sentimental Journey of Mr. Yorick*, when he died in lodgings, surrounded, as he had wished, by strangers only.

Sterne's humor is of the most subtle kind, and often springs from situations of lightly veiled indecency. His pathos is equally delicate, with a suspicion that haunts the reader that much of it is unmanly sentimentalism. Yet the episode of Le Fevre seldom fails to draw tears, while the characters of Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim, Dr. Slop and Widow Wadman, are amusing creations of genuine humor. Sterne was a notorious plagiarist, and owed obligations to Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* which he had the effrontery to suppress. His work as an artist in prose is superior to his worth as a man or his reputation as a parson.

The story of the life of **Tobias George Smollett** (1721–1771), the third, after Richardson and Fielding, of the great English novelists of last century, is scarcely less full of adventure than one of his own fictions. Only an outline of the story can be presented here. Smollett was of a good Dumbartonshire family, grandson of Sir James Smollett, a Scottish judge, and heir of entail to the rich family estates in the Vale of Leven. To these he would have succeeded if he had lived four years longer than he did. As it was, he began life provided only with a good education and excellent natural abilities. Unhappily a constitutional irritability of temper prevented his success in life. Apprenticed at first to a surgeon in Glasgow, he soon found his way to London, meaning to pursue a literary career, but he was obliged to accept a post as surgeon's mate on board a ship which took



part in the disastrous expedition to Carthagenæ in 1741. He was disgusted with the service, and after a sojourn in the West Indies turned up once more in London, bent more than ever on trying his lot in literature. With the profession of letters he sought to combine, but without success, the practice of medicine.

In his twenty-seventh year he published his first novel, *Roderick Random*, a narrative of adventure in which he utilized his own experiences, notably life as he found it on board of a man-of-war. It took the public taste, and was followed in 1751 by *Peregrine Pickle*, a maturer work, equally buoyant and even more boisterous, and marked by greater inequalities of style and incident. A gloomy novel, the adventures of the rascally Ferdinand Count Fathom, followed in 1753; and Smollett then turned his attention to translations, and afterwards to history. His version of *Don Quixote* was made in 1755, and his *Complete History of England from the Landing of Julius Cæsar to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle*, in 1758. The History was written with the vivacity of his novels, and Smollett found himself both famous and in the possession of means; but with fortune came failing health, domestic affliction, and a querulous dissatisfaction with everything and everybody. He travelled on the Continent for two years, and ultimately settling at Leghorn, wrote the *Expedition of Humphrey Clinker* (1771), the best of his novels, written in the form of letters which describe the adventures of a family travelling in England and Scotland, and published only a few weeks before his death. Smollett was unhappy in his political writings, which only brought him into trouble. A few poems, notably his *Ode to Independence*, his *Ode to Leven Water*, and *The Tears of Scotland*, the last-named a lament for the unhappy termination of the Forty-five, reveal a power of personification, natural description, and lyrical pathos of no mean order.

While Smollett occasionally rises above Fielding, he does not maintain the same high level, and though free of digression, to which Fielding was prone, he is of coarser tastes. He is remarkable for a variety of incidents and characters

almost bewildering in their abundance, and expressed in an easy, flowing style which is never obscure or tedious. If Fielding anticipated Thackeray, Smollett was the forerunner of Dickens. His love of fun leads him often to the verge of caricature. He painted a whole gallery of original characters, among which are the life-like portraits of Squire Bramble and Lieutenant Lesmahago, Commodore Trunnion and Jack Hatchway, Morgan and Tom Bowling, besides Strap, and Pipes, and Winifred Jenkins.

Other narrative writers or novelists of this period include :

**Addison**, in virtue of his portrayal of Sir Roger de Coverley and the town and country friends of that worthy knight.

**Johnson**, whose *Rasselas*, published in 1759, may be described as a didactic allegory or romance on the choice of life. It is the story of a prince's flight from the monotonous pleasures of The Happy Valley, his adventures in and around Cairo, his conversations with Nekayah and old Imlac, who accompanied him, and their ultimate return to Abyssinia.

**Horace Walpole** (1717-1797), whose *Castle of Otranto*, a mediæval romance, was published in 1765. It was the first historical romance, and so was the forerunner of the Waverley novels.

**Goldsmith**, whose *Vicar of Wakefield*, published in 1766, slowly made its way into favor, but keeps the popularity it at last acquired in virtue of its charmingly sweet and fresh delineations of idyllic English life, its quiet and gentle humor, and its flowing and graceful style.

**Fanny Burney** (1752-1840), whose comic novel *Evelina*, in 1778, marks the commencement of the society novel. She wrote other two novels, *Cecilia* and *Camilla*, the former dull, and the latter long since dead.

## HISTORIANS AND BIOGRAPHERS

**Gilbert Burnet** (1643-1715) was born in Edinburgh, educated at Aberdeen, where he graduated M.A. before he was fifteen, and, entering the Church, became parish minister of Saltoun in Haddingtonshire, and shortly afterwards Professor of Divinity in Glasgow University. He had the refusal of a bishopric before he was thirty. Leaving Scotland, he obtained several appointments in London, where he speedily

became the most popular preacher of the day. His sermons, which used to be applauded during their delivery, often ran out two hour-glasses. Burnet had personal qualifications to recommend him to popular favor as a preacher; he was a big, brawny, dark-complexioned man, with a strong voice, a frank manner, a sound heart, and broad sympathies. He made a great name in 1679 by the commencement of his *History of the Reformation*, and was again offered a bishopric. He declined the honor, but with more than a bishop's boldness reproved the king for his vices, and was stripped of his offices. He then attached himself to the court of the Prince of Orange at The Hague, and when the revolution occurred came over as King William's chaplain, and was made Bishop of Salisbury. He discharged all the duties of his office with a conscientious care, which marked the whole course of his busy and ambitious life, and yet found time to write his famous work, *The History of My Own Times*. He died in 1715, and the History appeared, agreeably to the injunctions of his will, some eight years later. No person desirous of knowing at first hand the political and social affairs of the century to which Burnet belonged can afford to neglect this gossipy but truthful record. What Horace Walpole said of it is true: "It seems as if the author had just come from the king's closet, or from the apartments of the men he describes, and was telling you in plain, honest terms what he had just seen and heard."

Distinguished as an essayist, a philosopher, and a historian, **David Hume** (1711-1776) was born in Edinburgh, the younger son of the proprietor of Ninewells, near Duns, in Berwickshire. He was educated at Edinburgh University with a view to the legal profession; but showing little inclination to that profession, he was placed with a mercantile house in Bristol, from which, having no talent for business, he retired to France, where in the society of Jesuits he gave himself up, on the slender allowance made him by his family, to the study of philosophy. The first-fruits of this study appeared in his twenty-eighth year in a *Treatise of*

*Human Nature.* The book attracted little or no attention at first, and even when remodelled and reproduced in 1748, under the title of *An Inquiry Concerning the Human Understanding*, was slow in finding readers. Yet the work marks an epoch in the history of philosophical thought; its tendency was to universal scepticism, to the belief that there can be no belief; and it was to counteract its destructive effects that the modern schools of Scottish and German metaphysics have been established. In 1741–1742 appeared his *Moral, Political, and Literary Essays*, which, though written in a style the lucidity of which could hardly fail to make him popular, reveal him as an opponent of the idea of popular government.

In 1745 Hume undertook the guardianship of a Scottish nobleman of weak intellect, a singular office of which he was soon glad to be rid. He next tried to become Professor of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh University, but failed; and in 1747, accepting the post of secretary to General St. Clair, he accompanied his chief first on a military expedition, and afterwards on an embassy to Vienna and Turin. During those wanderings he took notes of his impressions of the places which he visited, and the people with whom he came in contact. By-and-by we find him back again, a scholarly recluse among his books in his mother's country-house at Ninewells; and here, in 1751, he produced his *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, and, in 1752, his *Political Discourses*. In the former of these works he avows himself a utilitarian, taking up the position that the morality of an action is determined only by its utility. The latter is memorable for its suggestive pronouncements on political economy, notably its enunciation of the principles of free-trade, a doctrine afterwards more amply unfolded by Adam Smith.

In 1752 Hume was appointed librarian of the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh, an appointment which he valued solely as it gave him access to a magnificent collection of books. His residence was now in Edinburgh in a house of his own, where he lived in a style that was opulent to a man of his

economical habits and moderate tastes. And here, in these circumstances, and much esteemed for his gentle manners and sociable qualities, he began his *History of England*, working his way backward from the Stuarts to the Tudors, and ultimately to the time of the Roman occupation. The first part of the work appeared in 1754, the last in 1762. In 1763 Hume was in France as secretary to the English ambassador, and found himself at last famous and happy among the most eminent thinkers and *savans* of Paris. It was at this time he had the famous quarrel with Rousseau. On his return to England, after an absence of three years, he was appointed Under-Secretary of State, an office which he held for three years. In 1769 he came back to Edinburgh, where he passed the rest of his life in literary and social ease, and even affluence (on £1000 a year), in his quiet bachelor's way. On his death-bed he told Adam Smith that he had every reason to die contented.

Hume's *History* is as remarkable for its errors in matters of fact as for its lucidity and directness of style. His prejudice in favor of the Stuarts and against the Tudors, his entire want of enthusiasm for popular liberty, and his reverence for settled authority are among his faults as a historian; his merits lie in the clearness and dignity of his narrative, the balance of his sentence, and the force and picturesqueness of his phrase. He wrote to entertain rather than to instruct.

Ten years younger than Hume, to whom in style he bears a strange resemblance, **William Robertson** (1721-1793) was born in the manse of Borthwick, in Mid-Lothian, removed with his parents to Edinburgh at the age of twelve, and was educated in that city for the Scottish Church. His first charge was a parish in East Lothian where, two years after his appointment, was fought the battle of Prestonpans. The young clergyman had offered his services as a volunteer to Sir John Cope shortly before the battle. The large leisure of a country minister was devoted by Robertson to historical study and composition; at the same time he took an active

part in the General Assemblies, speaking often and eloquently on the Moderate side of Church politics. In 1758 he was nominated to one of the city charges in Edinburgh, and in the following year published his *History of Scotland*. It made him famous at once, and honors were heaped upon him beyond all precedent in the literary history of his country. The highest of these were the offices of principal of Edinburgh University and historiographer royal. In 1769 appeared his *History of the Emperor Charles V.*, for which he was paid £4500; and in 1777 his *History of America*.

Robertson, in private life, was distinguished for the grace and urbanity of his manner, his amiable disposition, and his conversational powers. His style has most of the best qualities of Hume's, the result in both of French culture; but Hume had the advantage of having mixed much and familiarly in the refined society of French men of letters and taste, and, in consequence, there is in his style a sense of well-bred ease and freedom which Robertson seems to lack. Robertson's style is regular where Hume's is varied; and somewhat stiff, but without loss of dignity, where Hume's is easy. There is, however, more feeling, and even pathos, in Robertson, especially in the passages of his Scottish History dealing with the miseries of the unfortunate Mary. His descriptions, too, are more splendidly imaginative, and, as in the account of Columbus preparing to take possession of the New World, impressive with something of the pomp of solemn poetry. A remarkable feature of both Hume's and Robertson's English is the almost total absence of Scotticisms. Modern research has found much with which to supplement and correct Robertson's *History of Scotland*, but his *History of America* must always remain a classic; while his *History of the Emperor Charles V.* is written with a general sagacity of truth which is hardly affected by several faulty details.

The greatest of English historians is **Edward Gibbon** (1737-1794). The story of his life is best told by himself; it is an absolutely true account, and is further interesting



from the style in which it is written. He was born at Putney of good parentage; was the only survivor of a family of seven children; was educated in a desultory fashion at home under the care of an aunt; and was sent to Magdalen College, Oxford, at the age of fifteen, with "a stock of erudition that might have puzzled a doctor, and a degree of ignorance of which a school-boy would have been ashamed." There he spent fourteen months—the most idle and unprofitable, he said, of his whole life. He was dismissed from Oxford on becoming a Papist. His father sent him abroad for reconversion to the Protestant faith—a result attained in about eighteen months in the house of a Calvinist clergyman of Lausanne, in Switzerland. He continued to board with this clergyman for about five years, reading with the utmost relish and constancy, and storing a memory of astonishing capacity with ideas of all kinds, especially ancient Latin and modern French. It was during those happy domestic years of private study that his love adventure happened, with the young lady afterwards famous in French history as Madame Necker. At twenty-one Gibbon returned to England, where he continued his studies as well as he could, and gained some knowledge of the military life and art by entering the Hampshire militia, in which he remained for two and a half years. He did not like the duties; "but the captain of the Hampshire grenadiers was not useless to the historian of the Roman Empire."

In 1763, the militia being disbanded, Gibbon was again free, and made use of his freedom by fleeing to the Continent. At last he reached Rome. Here, one historical autumn evening, a great idea struck him like an inspiration. "It was at Rome, on the 15th of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the *city* first started into my mind." Full of the idea, he returned home and began to collect materials for the great work. In 1770 his father died, and finding himself threatened with poverty, Gibbon removed from Hampshire to a quiet bachelor's

home in London, where he settled, and pursued his historical studies in secret. In 1774 he entered Parliament as member for Liskeard; but was content for eight years to record a silent vote in support of England's right to tax the American colonies. In 1776 the first volume of his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* was published, and was at once immensely successful; it was on every table. In one respect alone it gave offence; the tone of two chapters, the fifteenth and sixteenth, gave rise to the suspicion that he was sceptical of the divine origin of Christianity. The next two volumes were published, and the fourth was ready, when, with a view to stricter economy, he removed to Lausanne in 1783; and there the work was completed in the summer of 1787. He has recorded the circumstances connected with the completion of his mighty undertaking. "It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy in the recovery of my freedom, and perhaps the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion." Gibbon did not long survive. His life-work was accomplished. In 1793 he was glad to leave Lausanne, where the French Revolution had broken up the society in which he had found so much pleasure. He died in London prematurely old and exhausted by chronic disease.

In youth Gibbon was "a thin little figure with a large head"; in maturity he was a huge, cumbrous man, overloaded with flesh; one of his biographers describes him as grotesquely hideous, with a mouth like a round hole situated

nearly in the centre of his visage. In private life he was shy and hesitating among strangers, talked brilliantly among friends, and was constant in his friendships.

One great merit of Gibbon's history is its general accuracy. He is the only historian of last century whom modern research has not set aside. The range of his work is from the time of the Antonines to the Fall of Constantinople; the erudition which he displays over the whole of that extensive and varied field is almost superhuman. Nearly equal to his vast and specific information is the charm of his style, which might in one word be described as magnificent. The narrative goes on with an easy, stately, uniform strength; the descriptions are vivid, and splendid with the glow of a warm imagination; the diction, which has been well called Latin English, is in full harmony with the dignity of the general theme. He divides with Burke the honor of being the greatest prose writer of the eighteenth century.

It is usual to regard **James Boswell** (1740-1795) as a conceited fopling of average abilities, but the man who appreciated the moral grandeur of Johnson at its true worth and wrote the best biography in literature deserves a better description. With something of the vanity and fussy vivacity of Pepys, he carried beneath these obvious characteristics a simple and honest heart, and he was a genuine literary artist in catching "the manners living as they rise" and expressing them with dramatic force and fidelity, and in a style as little influenced by Johnsonese as even Goldsmith's.

He was born in Edinburgh of a good family, son of a Scottish judge, and heir to the estate of Auchinleck, in Ayrshire. He was trained for the Scottish bar, but neglected his profession for the society of Johnson, to whom he was introduced in 1763 in a bookseller's back parlor in circumstances graphically recorded in the biography of Johnson. While still young he studied at Utrecht, and made a tour of Southern Europe, visiting Rousseau in Switzerland, and Paoli in Corsica. In 1773 he was made a member of the Literary Club, and set out with Johnson on a visit to the

Highlands and Islands of Scotland. He took notes of the journey, and published *A Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* in 1785. Almost from his first introduction to Johnson he kept a diary of the words and actions of the sage, letting nothing escape him that could illustrate his subject; and the result was the famous biographical masterpiece, the *Life of Samuel Johnson*, published in 1791. The method of this *Life* was then still new to biography; it was, by correspondence and reported conversations, to make the subject tell its own story. Probably a hint of the method was suggested to Boswell by Mason's *Life and Letters of Gray*. Johnson's fame owes more to Boswell's biography of him than to *Rasselas*, or the Dictionary, or the *Lives of the Poets*.

Other writers of this period who have either composed history or collected materials for it include :

**John Evelyn** (1620–1706), whose diary extends from 1641 to 1697, and, like that of his friend **Samuel Pepys** (1633–1703), which goes from 1660 to 1669, flashes many a valuable and entertaining side-light on the social and political life of England in the time of the Stuarts.

**George Fox** (1624–1690), and **William Penn** (1644–1718), who wrote on the principles and progress of Quakerism.

**John Aubrey** (1626–1697), the too credulous antiquary, and his friend **Anthony à Wood** (1632–1695), the antiquarian annalist of Oxford.

**John Strype** (1643–1737), the historian of the Church and Church dignitaries.

**Conyers Middleton** (1683–1750), who wrote an admirable *Life of Cicero*, published in 1741.

**John, Lord Hervey** (1696–1743), the Sporus of Pope's satire, author of *Memoirs of the Reign of George II*.

**Smollett**, the novelist, whose *History of England* has been already mentioned; part of it—from 1688 to 1760—is usually printed as a sequel to Hume's *History of England*.

**William Tytler**, of Woodhouselee (1711–1792), who sought to vindicate the character of Queen Mary against the charges of Robertson and Hume.

**Dr. John Campbell** (1709–1775), the friend of Johnson, who wrote the *History of the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene*.

**Goldsmith**, who in 1763 published a *History of England* in a series of letters.

**Lord Hailes** (1726–1792), who wrote the *Annals of Scotland*.

**William Roscoe** (1753-1831), whose *Life of Lorenzo the Magnificent*, published in 1796, occupies the interval between Gibbon's *Fall of the Roman Empire* and Robertson's *History of Charles V.* In 1805 he published his *Life of Leo X.*

**William Mitford** (1744-1827), whose *History of Greece* was published between 1784 and 1810.

**James Currie** (1756-1805), the first (1800) and one of the best of the biographers of Burns.

## RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL WRITERS

It is a remarkable fact in the history of our literature that the most popular book in England, next to the Bible, was the production of an illiterate man, born in the humblest rank of life. That book is *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Next to the poetry of Milton, it is the finest and most characteristic literary outcome of English Puritanism. As a story it ranks on a level with *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels*; and, if not the most perfect, it is the most successful allegory in the language, *The Faërie Queene* not excepted. The author, **John Bunyan** (1628-1688), was born at Elstow, in Bedfordshire, the son of a tinker, and bred to his father's trade. He has represented his life in youth as vicious and dissolute in the extreme; but there is exaggeration in the description, due to the sensitiveness of his own conscience and the vividness of his own imagination. The catalogue of his youthful sins, as drawn up by himself, included lying and swearing, bell-ringing and dancing, and playing hockey on Sundays. In his seventeenth year, the Civil War being then in progress, he became, for about a twelvemonth, a soldier in the "New Model," and was present at the siege of Leicester, where he had a narrow escape. His military experiences he afterwards turned to good account, more especially in his second great allegory, *The Holy War*. Shortly after returning to his trade he married a very poor but pious and affectionate woman, whose influence gradually induced him to break off his bad habits and lead a religious life.

In 1653 he left the Church of England to become a Bap-

tist, and a few years afterwards, having in the meantime passed through a period of tormenting fears to perfect serenity of soul, began to preach in the villages of Bedfordshire. The gift of a homely, direct, and picturesque speech, combined with moral earnestness and richness of spiritual experience, gave him unusual power over the masses, and people flocked to hear his sermons. His figure, too, was not without attractiveness. Against the fashion of his time he wore his own hair, which was red, and a heavy mustache; and united in singular contrast gentle manners and an affable disposition to a tall, gaunt figure and rough if not ferocious features. Extremely popular with the common people, he was ridiculed and opposed by the regular clergy, who made various attempts to silence him. At last, in 1660, on a charge of preaching in unlicensed conventicles, he was imprisoned in Bedford jail, where the next twelve years and more of his life were passed, but in no very rigorous confinement. He employed the time in ministering to his fellow-prisoners, in reading the Bible and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, above all in writing religious tracts and treatises, *Grace Abounding* and *The Holy City*, and, most noteworthy of all, the first and greatest part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Meanwhile he worked for himself and his family, his wife and poor children, "especially my poor third child, who lay nearer to my heart than all besides," by tagging thread laces and selling them at the jail door to passers-by.

By the Declaration of Indulgence he, along with thousands of other Nonconformists imprisoned all over England, was released in 1672, and resumed the life of an itinerant preacher, with regular duties in the Baptist chapel at Bedford. At the same time he continued the use of his pen. Besides publishing the first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the story of Christian, in 1678, he wrote the second part, the story of Christiana and her children, printed in 1684; *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*, a realistic story told in dialogue, printed in 1680; and *The Holy War*, printed in 1682. His fame as a preacher began to be known in London; he became the most influential of the Noncon-



formists, and was familiarly spoken of as Bishop Bunyan. He died in a friend's house in London from the effects of a chill caught in a long ride through a rainstorm. He was returning from Reading, whither he had gone to reconcile a father and a rebellious son.

The features of *The Pilgrim's Progress* which have made it the successful book it is are the romantic and spiritual interest of the tale; the vividness of the portraiture, and the variety of types portrayed; the absorbing nature, diversity, and number of the incidents; the dramatic force and consistency of the dialogues; the touches of pathos, humor, and sublimity; the glimpses of English scenery and society, utterly true to the life; and the naturalness of the narrative in simple, unstudied words of vernacular and Bible English.

One of the ablest advocates for civil and religious liberty, but better known as the founder of English philosophy on a basis of common-sense, was **John Locke** (1632-1704), born in Somersetshire, near Bristol, the son of a captain in the Parliamentary army. He was educated in Westminster and Christ Church College, Oxford. The bent of his mind was to the experimental philosophy of Bacon and Descartes rather than to the system of Aristotle as it was then taught, and he studied for the medical profession, but, owing to an asthmatical affection, never practised. He was a lecturer of his college when, in 1666, he became acquainted with Lord Ashley, afterwards the first Earl of Shaftesbury (the Achitophel of Dryden's great satire). With this astute politician he went to reside in the capacity of friend, secretary, and family tutor. He so identified himself with this household that his fortunes fluctuated with those of his patrons. Now he held office in England under Shaftesbury's administration; now he shared Shaftesbury's exile in the Low Countries. In 1683 Shaftesbury died, and Locke continued to stay in Holland, where he thought and wrote on subjects connected with the government of Church and State, the principles of education, and the nature, operations, laws, and limitations of the mind. Within one notable year,

1689–90, when he was now on the verge of sixty, he published his greatest works: *Letters Concerning Toleration*, two *Treatises of Government*, and the famous *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. He had returned to England in the year of the Revolution, and was soon rewarded by King William with a commissionership of appeals, followed in 1695 by a commissionership of trade and plantations. His book on education was published two years before the latter appointment, and was followed at various intervals by treatises on theological subjects. Ill-health compelled him in 1700 to quit office and London, and he was staying at Oates in Essex, in the house of a friend, when four years later his busy life came to a peaceful close.

Locke's work as a mental philosopher was to clear away the unfounded speculations of previous thinkers by an independent and common-sense investigation of the faculties and phenomena of the mind. He denied, and, as some think, disproved, the doctrine of innate ideas, or intuitions, and sought to trace all human knowledge and authoritative belief to the operation of the senses and the process of reasoning—to the two sources of Sensation and Reflection. His style is singularly unattractive; it is clear and convincing, but colorless and monotonous.

To Locke succeeded **George Berkeley** (1685–1753), the most brilliant of his disciples, and the most eminent philosopher between him and Hume. In one respect his life offers a great contrast to that of his fellow-countryman and friend, Swift; the bishopric for which Swift all his life sighed came to Berkeley unsought and undesired. He was one of the most amiable, the most unselfish, the nearest to a perfect character, among men. Pope declared that he had every virtue under heaven; Atterbury that he was more angelic than human. He was, besides, an accomplished scholar, and the possessor of a style unique for its brilliancy and refinement in philosophical literature; it places him, indeed, among the most polished prose writers not only of his century but of his country. To these intellectual gifts and

moral graces he added the recommendation of a beautiful person and winning manners. There is little wonder that he was a universal favorite, admired and beloved wherever he went or was known. He is still further attractive from the novelty of his philosophical theory that what we call the external world of matter is unreal, and from the romantic scheme of his life—to found a college in Bermuda for the Christianizing of the American Indians.

George Berkeley was born near Thomastown, in Kilkenny County; educated, like Congreve and Swift before him, at Kilkenny School, and sent to Trinity College, Dublin, in his fifteenth year. Seven years later he graduated M.A. and obtained a fellowship; and in 1709 he published his *New Theory of Vision*, in which he first tried to prove the non-existence of matter. In the following year he brought out his *Principles of Human Knowledge*, and in 1713 his *Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*; the object of these works was to undermine the growing scepticism, atheism, and irreligion of the age by demonstrating, from the unreality of matter and the existence of recurrent ideas in the mind of man, the necessity of a divine omnipresent mind as the abode of those ideas. In 1713 he left Trinity College and came to London, where he was welcomed by Swift and Pope, Addison and Steele. At Steele's request he wrote a few articles for *The Guardian*. Through Swift's influence he was appointed chaplain (he had taken orders in 1709) and secretary to the English Ambassador in Italy (Lord Peterborough). He was several years in Italy; and after his return to England he was presented to the Deanery of Derry, worth £1100 a year.

He gave up his fellowship, and began to meditate a romantic college scheme for the conversion of the American savages. He proposed to exchange his rich deanery for the principalship of the ideal college on a salary of £100 a year. It was in vain that Swift bantered him on the subject—he was resolved on trying the experiment; and at last Swift made interest with ministers, and under Walpole's administration a vote for a public grant of £20,000 to endow the

Bermuda College passed both Houses of Parliament. Berkeley proposed to devote to the scheme his own income and the legacy which had been left him by Hester Vanhomrigh (Vanessa, who had never seen him). In 1728 he married a wife and set out—not for the Bermudas, but for Rhode Island, where he took a farm and settled, and waited for the realization of his great idea. Three years he waited, happy enough in hope, and in the composition, in a cave on the shore, of his seven dialogues entitled *Alciphron, or the Minute Philosopher*—another attack upon the freethinkers. But Walpole probably never meant to keep faith about the £20,000; the scheme was wrecked, and Berkeley came home disappointed.

He settled in London, though he was still Dean of Derry, and in 1732 published *Alciphron*. Two years later, being now in his fiftieth year, he was made, through the good offices of Queen Caroline, Bishop of Cloyne, in Ireland, and, proceeding to his diocese, settled, and remained there for the next eighteen years. In 1744 appeared his strange book *Siris*, in which, among other matters, he treats of the medicinal efficacy of tar-water, a beverage which he describes in the very words in which Cowper afterwards wrote of tea, as cheering but not inebriating. In 1752 he came with his family to live at Oxford, to be near his son, a student of Christ Church. He held the idea that a bishop should reside within his see or surrender his office; but the king would not listen to his resignation, and said the bishop could live where he liked. Berkeley had several years previously declined the bishopric of Clogher, which Lord Chesterfield offered him, though Clogher was twice the value of Cloyne. Berkeley died only a few months after his arrival in Oxford.

**Adam Smith** (1723–1790), celebrated as the founder of the science of political economy, was the posthumous son of a comptroller of customs at the Fifeshire port of Kirkealdy. He was intended for the Scottish Church, and was educated at Glasgow University, and Balliol College, Oxford, where he

developed a taste for science and literature. He was appointed professor first of Logic, and afterwards—in succession to Hutcheson—of Ethics, at Glasgow University, and in 1759 produced his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*—a theory which sought to base virtue on sympathy. For two years, 1764–66, he went as tutor with the young Duke of Buccleuch on a tour through Europe, and, returning to his native town, gave himself up to study for the next ten years. At the end of that time he brought out his famous book, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. The sound and enlightened policy of Pitt, in many relations of his career as a statesman, was due to this book; he was a student at Cambridge when it appeared (1776); that same year he read it, and was convinced of its soundness; and he applied its principles in the art of government as soon as he became a minister. Smith finds that labor is the only source of wealth, that money does not necessarily mean wealth, and that freedom of labor in the individual and trade in the nation are the best means of promoting the public wealth. These were not original doctrines; they had been expressed before, by Hume and others, but never with such elaborate proof and luminous illustration. Smith was rewarded by a commissionership of customs, and lived in easy circumstances to the time of his death in 1790. His style is remarkable for clearness of arrangement, lucidity of statement, and aptness and abundance of illustration.

Other famous or popular authors belonging to the class of religious and philosophical writers of this period (1660–1789) include:

**Richard Baxter**, a leading Nonconformist divine, whose catalogued works number one hundred and sixty-eight—"enough to load a cart," as Judge Jeffreys told him—of which only two are now read, *The Saints' Everlasting Rest*, published in 1650, and *A Call to the Unconverted*.

**Ralph Cudworth**, Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge, author of a vast folio volume of one thousand pages entitled *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, published in 1678 as the first part of a work intended to refute atheism; in morals he maintained the freedom of the will and the eternal and immutable distinction between right and wrong, claiming for reason the power of perceiving the distinction.

**The Hon. Robert Boyle**, son of the Earl of Cork, a very distinguished experimental philosopher in the departments of chemistry and physics, the Bacon of his age, and one of the founders of the Royal Society (incorporated in 1662); he wrote a great deal on scientific and religious subjects, always in the case of the latter in defence of Christianity; his style in *Occasional Reflections on Several Subjects* was cleverly burlesqued by Swift in his *Meditations on a Broomstick*.

**Isaac Barrow**, reputed the best scholar of his time, Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, and a distinguished theologian and preacher; in the pulpit he was notorious for his slovenly dress and his interminable sermons.

**John Tillotson**, Primate of England for the last three years of his life, a popular and fluent preacher, candid, kind-hearted, and of liberal views; he left no property at his death except a collection of sermons in MS., for the copyright of which his widow received from a publisher two thousand five hundred guineas.

**Robert South**, Rector of Islip in Oxfordshire, and the wittiest of English divines, a virulent controversialist, and a fierce believer in the divine right of kings; his sermons are still readable, especially for their incisive force of style.

**William Sherlock**, Dean of St. Paul's, long immensely popular for his *Practical Discourse on Death*, famous for his controversy on the doctrine of the Trinity with South; he was a bitter opponent of the Nonconformists, towards whom Tillotson was charitably disposed.

**Sir Isaac Newton**, the pupil of Barrow, and his successor in the chair of Mathematics at Cambridge, M.P. for his university, warden of the Mint, and president of the Royal Society; he was the greatest natural philosopher the world has known. Chief among his many brilliant discoveries may be mentioned his theory of gravitation and his theory of light; by the former, in the language of Thomson, he "bound the suns and planets to their spheres," while by the latter he "untwisted all the shining robe of day." His scientific works are entitled *Principia*, published in 1687, and *Optics, a Treatise on Light*, in 1704; he also wrote, like Boyle and Barrow and other scientific men of the time, on theological subjects, choosing especially the prophecies and Book of Revelation for his speculations. He was remarkable for his modesty.

**Anthony Ashley Cooper**, Earl of Shaftesbury, grandson of the first Lord Shaftesbury (the crafty politician whom Dryden satirized as Achitophel); he was the pupil of Locke, and author of an *Enquiry Concerning Virtue* (1699), and *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times* (1711): a man of pure character and



refined tastes, he ranks as one of the most graceful and harmonious of the prose writers of last century; in ethics he sought to establish the theory of a separate moral sense by which the distinction of right from wrong is recognized.

**Isaac Watts**, an Independent clergyman, who, while still under forty, withdrawing from active life through ill-health, found a home for thirty-six years in the country mansion of a friend; in which snug retirement he wrote a variety of Psalms and Hymns, and *Divine and Moral Songs for Children*, besides an elementary *Treatise on Logic*.

**Samuel Clarke**, one of the most eminent divines of his day, the friend of Newton, whom he defended against the attack of Leibnitz, and whom he might have succeeded as master of the Mint; he wrote on *The Being and Attributes of God* and on *The Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, with much convincing force, but in a cold, mathematical style.

**Joseph Butler**, Bishop of Bristol, and afterwards of Durham, and who might have been primate; author of a volume of sermons and *The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature*; of his *Sermons* the first three deal with the subject of morality, and assert the supremacy of conscience as representing the will of God in the economy of human nature; the *Analogy* (published 1736) aims at proving the existence of Deity from the phenomena of the external world.

**Francis Hutcheson**, an Irish school-master, who having made a reputation by his *Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, on the lines laid down by Shaftesbury, was appointed Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow, and became the teacher of Adam Smith; his *System of Moral Philosophy*, written lucidly and with taste, was published a few years after his death.

**Philip Doddridge**, an eminent Nonconformist divine, author of *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, and a very popular *Life of Colonel Gardiner* (who fell at Prestonpans in 1745); much praised by Johnson for his epigrammatic interpretation of the family motto "*Dum vivimus vivamus*"—"Live while you live," etc.

**John Wesley**, an amiable, scholarly, and devoted Christian apostle of the eighteenth century, the founder of the Methodists, who preached forty thousand sermons and travelled three hundred thousand miles to disseminate the doctrine of universal redemption; born in 1703, he lived till he was eighty-eight, and continued writing, journeying, and preaching to the last; he was, in conjunction with his brother Charles, the author of at least two collections of Psalms and Hymns.

**Thomas Reid**, the father of Scottish or common-sense philosophy,

Professor of Ethics in Glasgow, and author of *An Inquiry into the Human Mind, On the Intellectual Powers*, and *On the Active Powers*; in ethics he accepts the moral sense of Shaftesbury.

**David Hume** (already noticed under the Historians), the logical successor of Locke and Berkeley, author of *A Treatise on Human Nature*, *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, and *An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*; he limited knowledge to the experience of the senses, and he regarded utility as the standard of morality.

**Joseph Priestley**, an experimental philosopher, a Unitarian in theology, and the opponent of the doctrines of Free Will and Intuition.

**William Paley**, Archdeacon of Carlisle, and holder of many other lucrative Church appointments, author of *Horæ Paulinæ* and *Evidences of Christianity*; his style is cold and measured, not unlike that of Clarke.

#### CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF AUTHORS FROM 1660 TO 1789

##### (A) Surviving from Last Period

- 1588-1667. George Wither, poet.
- 1588-1679. Thomas Hobbes, philosopher.
- 1591-1673. Robert Herrick, poet.
- 1593-1683. Izaak Walton, essayist and biographer.
- 1594-1666. James Shirley, dramatist.
- 1605-1682. Sir Thomas Browne, philosopher.
- 1608-1674. Edward Hyde (Lord Clarendon), historian.
- 1608-1674. John Milton, poet.
- 1613-1667. Jeremy Taylor, religious writer.

##### (B) Belonging to the Period

- 1605-1687. Edmund Waller, poet.
- 1605-1668. Sir William Davenant, poet and dramatist.
- 1612-1680. Samuel Butler, satirical wit and verse writer.
- 1613-1684. Robert Leighton (Archbishop), religious writer.
- 1615-1691. Richard Baxter, religious writer.
- 1615-1668. Sir John Denham, descriptive poet.
- 1617-1688. Ralph Cudworth, philosopher.
- 1618-1667. Abraham Cowley, poet and essayist.
- 1620-1706. John Evelyn, historical diarist.
- 1620-1678. Andrew Marvell, poet.
- 1627-1688. George Villiers (Duke of Buckingham), dramatist.
- 1627-1691. Hon. Robert Boyle, philosopher.
- 1628-1688. John Bunyan, religious allegorical writer.

- 1629-1699. Sir William Temple, essayist.  
1630-1677. Isaac Barrow, religious writer.  
1630-1694. John Tillotson (Archbishop), religious writer.  
1631-1700. John Dryden, poet, dramatist, and critic.  
1632-1704. John Locke, philosopher.  
1632-1703. Samuel Pepys, diarist.  
1633-1716. Robert South, religious writer.  
1633-1684. Wentworth Dillon (Lord Roscommon), poet.  
1635-1715. Thomas Burnet, philosopher.  
1636-1713. Thomas Sprat (Bishop), biographer.  
1636-1691. Sir George Mackenzie, essayist.  
1637-1705. Charles Sackville (Lord Dorset), poet.  
1638-1701. Sir Charles Sedley, dramatist.  
1640-1715. William Wycherley, dramatist.  
1640-1689. Mrs. Aphra Behn, dramatist.  
1641-1707. William Sherlock, religious writer.  
1642-1727. Sir Isaac Newton, philosopher.  
1643-1715. Gilbert Burnet (Bishop), historian.  
1643-1737. John Strype, historian.  
1648-1680. John Wilmot (Lord Rochester), poet.  
1651-1685. Thomas Otway, dramatist.  
1656-1691. Nat Lee, dramatist.  
1657-1734. John Dennis, critic, etc.  
1660-1746. Thomas Southerne, dramatist.  
1660-1731. Daniel Defoe, novelist.  
1661-1715. Charles Montague (Lord Halifax), poet.  
1662-1742. Richard Bentley, critic.  
1662-1731. Francis Atterbury (Bishop), religious writer.  
1663-1708. William Walsh, critic.  
1664-1721. Matthew Prior, poet.  
1667-1735. John Arbuthnot, essayist and narrative writer.  
1667-1745. Jonathan Swift, satirical narrative writer.  
1669-1729. William Congreve, dramatist.  
1670-1729. Sir Richard Steele, essayist and dramatist.  
1670-1718. Sir Samuel Garth, poet.  
1671-1713. Ashley Cooper (third Lord Shaftesbury), philosopher.  
1671-1757. Colley Cibber, dramatist.  
1671-1749. Ambrose Philips, poet.  
1672-1719. Joseph Addison, essayist.  
1672-1726. Sir John Vanbrugh, dramatist.  
1673-1718. Nicholas Rowe, dramatist.  
1674-1748. Isaac Watts, religious writer.  
1675-1729. Samuel Clarke, philosopher and religious writer.  
1676-1708. John Philips, poet.  
1676-1740. Thomas Tickell, poet.

- 1676-1761. Benjamin Hoadly (Bishop), religious writer.  
1678-1751. Henry St. John (Lord Bolingbroke), essayist.  
1678-1707. George Farquhar, dramatist.  
1679-1718. Thomas Parnell, poet.  
1681-1765. Edward Young, poet.  
1684-1753. George Berkeley (Bishop), philosopher.  
1686-1758. Allan Ramsay, Scottish poet and dramatist.  
1688-1732. John Gay, poet.  
1688-1744. Alexander Pope, poet.  
1689-1761. Samuel Richardson, novelist.  
1692-1742. William Somerville, poet.  
1692-1753. Joseph Butler (Bishop), philosopher and religious writer.  
1694-1747. Francis Hutcheson, philosopher.  
1696-1782. Henry Home (Lord Kames), essayist and critic.  
1696-1737. Matthew Green, poet.  
1697-1743. Richard Savage, poet.  
1698-1779. William Warburton (Bishop), religious writer.  
1698-1765. David Malloch, poet.  
1699-1746. Robert Blair, poet.  
1700-1758. John Dyer, poet.  
1700-1748. James Thomson, poet.  
1701-1751. Philip Doddridge, religious writer.  
1703-1791. John Wesley, religious writer.  
1706-1783. Henry Brooke, novelist.  
1707-1754. Henry Fielding, novelist.  
1708-1773. George, Lord Lyttelton, historian.  
1709-1779. John Armstrong, poet.  
1709-1784. Samuel Johnson, critic and essayist.  
1710-1796. Thomas Reid, philosopher.  
1711-1792. William Tytler, historian.  
1711-1776. David Hume, historian and philosopher.  
1712-1785. Richard Glover, poet.  
1713-1768. Laurence Sterne, novelist.  
1714-1763. William Shenstone, poet.  
1714-1799. James Burnet (Lord Monboddo), philosopher.  
1716-1771. Thomas Gray, poet.  
1717-1797. Horace Walpole (Lord Orford), novelist, etc.  
1718-1800. Hugh Blair, critic and religious writer.  
1720-1771. George Tobias Smollett, novelist.  
1721-1759. William Collins, poet.  
1721-1770. Mark Akenside, poet.  
1721-1777. Samuel Foote, dramatist.  
1722-1791. William Robertson, historian.  
1722-1808. John Home, dramatist.

- 1723-1790. Adam Smith, philosopher.  
 1723-1792. Sir Joshua Reynolds, critic of art.  
 1728-1790. Thomas Warton, poet and historian.  
 1728-1774. Oliver Goldsmith, essayist, poet, dramatist, etc.  
 1730-1802. John Moore, novelist.  
 1730-1797. Edmund Burke, essayist and philosopher.  
 1730-1769. William Falconer, poet.  
 1731-1764. Charles Churchill, poet.  
 1731-1802. Erasmus Darwin, verse writer.  
 1731-1800. William Cowper, poet.  
 1733-1794. George Colman, the elder, dramatist.  
 1733-1804. Joseph Priestley, philosopher and religious writer.  
 1735-1803. James Beattie, poet.  
 1736-1812. Horne Tooke, essayist and critic.  
 1737-1794. Edward Gibbon, historian.  
 1738-1796. James Macpherson, poet.  
 1740-1795. James Boswell, biographer.  
 1743-1805. William Paley, philosopher.  
 1744-1825. William Mitford, historian.  
 1745-1831. Henry Mackenzie, essayist and novelist.  
 1746-1767. Michael Bruce, poet.  
 1751-1774. Robert Fergusson, Scottish poet.  
 1752-1770. Thomas Chatterton, poet.  
 1752-1816. Richard Brinsley Sheridan, dramatist.  
 1752-1840. Fanny Burney (Madame D'Arblay), novelist.  
 1753-1821. Mrs. Elizabeth Inchbald, novelist and dramatist.  
 1753-1831. William Roscoe, historian.  
 1754-1832. George Crabbe, poet.  
 1757-1827. William Blake, poet.  
 1759-1796. Robert Burns, Scottish poet.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF WORKS PUBLISHED BETWEEN  
1660 AND 1789

1660. Dryden's *Astræa Redux*.  
 1662. Fuller's *Worthies of England*.  
 1663. Butler's *Hudibras* (Part I.); Dryden's *Wild Gallant*.  
 1667. Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*; Milton's *Paradise Lost*.  
 1668. Cowley's *Works* (Poems and Essays).  
 1671. Milton's *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*.  
 1677. Wycherley's *Plain Dealer* (first acted in 1674).  
 1678. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (Part I.); Dryden's *All for Love*.  
 1680. Otway's *Orphan*.  
 1681. Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*.

1682. Bunyan's Holy War; Dryden's *Religio Laici*; Otway's *Venice Preserved*.
1685. Cotton's Translation of Montaigne's *Essays*.
1687. Dryden's *Hind and Panther*; Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia*; Montague and Prior's *Town Mouse and Country Mouse*.
1690. Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding*.
1692. Sir William Temple's *Essays*.
1693. Congreve's *Old Bachelor*.
1694. Congreve's *Double Dealer*.
1695. Congreve's *Love for Love*.
1697. Congreve's *Mourning Bride*; Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*.
1698. Collier's *Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the Stage*; Vanbrugh's *Provoked Wife*.
1700. Congreve's *Way of the World*.
1704. Addison's *Campaign*; Clarendon's *History of the Great Rebellion (First Part)*, 33 years after his death; Swift's *Battle of the Books*, and *A Tale of a Tub*; Dennis's *Grounds of Criticism in Poetry*.
1705. John Philips's *Splendid Shilling*.
1706. Farquhar's *Recruiting Officer*.
1707. Farquhar's *Beaux' Stratagem*; Prior's *Poems*.
1709. Berkeley's *New Theory of Vision*; Pope's *Pastorals*; "The Tatler" (1st No. on 12th April).
1710. Parnell's *Hermit*.
1711. Pope's *Essay on Criticism*; "The Spectator" (1st No. on 1st March); Shaftesbury's *Characteristics of Men*, etc.
1712. Pope's *Rape of the Lock*; Arbuthnot's *History of John Bull*.
1713. Addison's *Cato*; Pope's *Windsor Forest*; Rowe's *Jane Shore*.
1715. Pope's *Translations of the Iliad* (vol. i.).
1717. Cibber's *Non-Juror*; Pope's *Eloisa to Abelard*, and *Elegy on an Unfortunate Lady*.
1719. Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (Part I.); Tickell's *Elegy on Addison*; Isaac Watts's *Hymns*; Young's *Revenge*.
1723. Pope's *Odyssey* (completed in 1725—Broome and Fenton assisting).
1724. Burnet's *History of My Own Times* (vol. i.), 9 years after his death; Swift's *Drapier's Letters*.
1725. Allan Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd*.
1726. Butler's *Sermons*; Dyer's *Grongar Hill*; Thomson's *Winter*; Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.
1728. Pope's *Dunciad* (First Version); Gay's *Beggars' Opera*.
1730. Thomson's *Seasons*.
1732. Pope's *Essay on Man*, and *Moral Essays* (begun).
1733. Pope's *Imitations of Horace* (begun).
1735. Pope's *Prologue to the Satires*; Somerville's *Chace*.



1737. Glover's Leonidas; Green's Spleen; Shenstone's School-mistress.
1740. Richardson's Pamela.
1742. Young's Night Thoughts (First Part); Fielding's Joseph Andrews.
1743. Blair's Grave.
1744. Akenside's Pleasures of Imagination.
1746. Collins's Odes.
1748. Hume's Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding; Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe; Smollett's Roderick Random; Thomson's Castle of Indolence.
1749. Fielding's Tom Jones.
1751. Fielding's Amelia; Gray's Elegy; Smollett's Peregrine Pickle.
1753. Richardson's Sir Charles Grandison.
1754. Hume's History of England (vol. i.).
1755. Johnson's Dictionary.
1756. Burke's Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful; Home's Tragedy of Douglas.
1757. Gray's Odes (The Bard, etc.); Dyer's Fleece.
1759. Johnson's Rasselas; Robertson's History of Scotland; Sterne's Tristram Shandy (First Part).
1760. Goldsmith's Citizen of the World (begun, in "The Ledger").
1762. Macpherson's Ossian.
1763. Lady Mary Montagu's Letters.
1764. Churchill's Candidate; Walpole's Castle of Otranto.
1766. Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield.
1768. Goldsmith's Good-natured Man; Sterne's Sentimental Journey.
1769. The Letters of "Junius" (begun on 21st Jan. in "The Public Advertiser").
1770. Goldsmith's Deserted Village.
1771. Beattie's Minstrel (First Book); Mackenzie's Man of Feeling; Smollett's Humphrey Clinker.
1773. Goldsmith's She Stoops to Conquer.
1774. Thomas Warton's History of English Poetry (completed in 1778).
1775. Sheridan's The Rivals.
1776. Gibbon's Decline and Fall; Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations.
1777. Sheridan's School for Scandal.
1778. Fanny Burney's Evelina.
1779. Johnson's Lives of the Poets; Cowper and Newton's Olney Hymns.
1781. Crabbe's Library.
1782. Cowper's Table Talk, etc.
1783. Blair's Rhetoric; Crabbe's Village.

- 1784. Mitford's History of Greece (vol. i.).
- 1785. Cowper's Task.
- 1786. Burns's Poems.
- 1788. "The Times" (1st No. on 1st Jan.).
- 1789. Blake's Songs of Innocence.

## 1789-1894

### FROM THE FRENCH REVOLUTION TO THE PRESENT TIME

THE range is over more than a century, and extends from the middle of the reign of George III. to the fifty-eighth year of the reign of Victoria. The succession of sovereigns in the period is as follows: George III., George IV., William IV., and Victoria. The chief events in British history, affecting more or less directly the literary growth of the period, are here presented as they occurred in the successive reigns:

**Reign of George III., [1760-] 1789-1820.**—Trial of Warren Hastings, lasting seven years, from 1788. War with France, more or less continuously from 1793 to 1815: Naval victories—battle of "The First of June," Cape St. Vincent, Camperdown, The Nile, The Baltic, Trafalgar (with death of Nelson); land victories—(in India) over Tippoo Sahib and his French auxiliaries; (in Ireland) over the "United Irishmen" and their French auxiliaries; (in the Peninsula, at Corunna, Talavera, Albuera, Salamanca, etc.) over the French; and final overthrow of Napoleon at Waterloo by Wellington. Union of Great Britain and Ireland, in 1800. Riots in England after the peace—the Peterloo Massacre of 1819.

*Note.*—At the time of the French Revolution England was prosperous, and by the use of inventions of machinery had become a great manufacturing country. During the war, in spite of heavy taxation to maintain it, trade and commerce flourished; after the war came commercial panics, and misery to the poor: corn was dear, work scarce, and there was great political discontent in the country.

**Reign of George IV., 1820-1830.**—The Cato Street Conspiracy. The Bill of Pains and Penalties: death of Queen Caroline. Commercial speculations and panic (involving the ruin of Sir Walter Scott). British fleet sent to the aid of Greece—battle of Navarino (1825). Catholic Relief Bill, passed in 1829.

*Note.*—In this reign the Criminal Laws were amended, and the first steps to Free Trade were taken.

**Reign of William IV., 1830-1837.**—Reform Act, 1832. Abolition of slavery in the British colonies, 1834. Other reforms—relative to the relief of the poor, the employment of children, etc.

*Note.*—In this reign money grants in aid of elementary education were first given: and the first railway (between Liverpool and Manchester) was opened.

**Reign of Victoria, 1837-1894.**—Rebellion in Lower Canada. The Chartist Movement. Famine in Ireland; Free Trade in corn, 1849. The Great Exhibition of 1851. Death of Wellington, 1852. The Crimean War, 1854-1856—battles of the Alma, Balaclava, and Inkerman, siege of Sebastopol. Mutiny in India, 1857. "Cotton" Famine in Lancashire—an effect of the American Civil War of 1861-1865. Fenian outrages; disestablishment of the Irish Church, 1869. Renewal of the Eastern Question; the Berlin Congress, 1878. War with Zulus; followed by war with Boers in South Africa. Bombardment of Alexandria, and battle of Tel-el-Kebir, 1882; death of Gordon, at Khartoum, 1885. The Home Rule Question of 1886; split of the Liberal party. The Queen's Jubilee. Free elementary education.

### INTRODUCTION

In the history of English literature the nineteenth century takes high rank—indeed, all but the highest. It comes next in the value and importance of its literary productions to the century which lies between the youth of Shakespeare and the ripe age of Milton. "The literature of England," wrote Shelley, himself a prime factor in the age he described, "has arisen, as it were, from a new birth. . . . We live among such philosophers and poets as surpass beyond comparison any who have appeared since the last national struggle for civil and religious liberty." The age is memorable, not only for the quality, but also for the quantity and variety, of its literary work. There has been great activity in all departments of prose and verse composition, the drama for various reasons being the only exception. This activity has more especially manifested itself in poetry, fiction, history (including

biography), and criticism. And a new and vigorous department has been created for science and scientific travel. The amount of literary matter produced is beyond belief. Thousands of books are issued every year, and there has been enormous increase in the number of periodicals. The reading public now means the whole nation. Much of our best literature finds its way into the quarterly and monthly magazines, and the weekly, and even the daily, newspaper devotes a large part of its space to literary essays and criticism. Even our best authors are more or less connected with the periodical press. It is no exaggeration to say that literature and journalism have joined hands—a union which dates from the establishment of *The Edinburgh Review* in 1802. They were only occasional companions before that.

The century, and especially the earlier part of it, is strong in poetry. Among its great poetical names are those of Wordsworth, Scott, Coleridge, Campbell, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Mrs. Browning, Tennyson, Robert Browning, Matthew Arnold, William Morris, and Swinburne; to which might be added Hogg, as representing purely Scottish poetry, Moore, as representing the poetical genius of Ireland, and such notable American poet-names as Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, and Whitman. Fiction, which of all literary forms is now most largely cultivated, and which has special and peculiar attractions for female writers, is well represented by such names as Scott, Disraeli, Lytton, Thackeray, Dickens, Reade, Charlotte Brontë, "George Eliot," Meredith, Hardy, and Stevenson; to which might be added, as representative of America, Cooper, Hawthorne, Mrs. Stowe, Howells, and Crawford. In the department of history and biography, the great names are M'Crie, Southey, Hallam, Alison, Lockhart, Grote, Carlyle, Macaulay, Hill, Burton,

Kinglake, Forster, Helps, Lewis, Froude, Buckle, Masson, Freeman, Gardiner, Green, Lecky, and John Morley; to which, as representing America, might be added Prescott and Motley. The greatest names in criticism and the essay are Gifford, Coleridge, Jeffrey, Lamb, Hazlitt, Wilson, De Quincey, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Matthew Arnold. Science and philosophy are represented by Brewster, Herschel, Lyell, Stuart Mill, Darwin, Herbert Spencer, Tyndall, Russel Wallace, and Huxley.

The extraordinary literary activity of the nineteenth century is due to a variety of causes, among which it is impossible to overlook the vast improvements that have been made in the art of printing, and the perfect freedom wisely allowed to the press. Other obvious causes will be found in the great increase that has been made in the wealth and welfare of the nation—in its material prosperity, and its moral and social advancement. But the main cause was the event, or rather series of events, known as the French Revolution. This was a movement on the part of the oppressed French nation, which had for its object the final overthrow of tyranny and the assertion of the natural and equal rights of man. It came to be identified with the hope and aspiration of humanity for brotherhood and peace among the nations. France was believed to be leading the van in the great millennial movement for universal brotherhood. She had the sympathy of generous hearts and sincere and thoughtful minds everywhere. Her success, when in 1789 she demolished the Bastille, and in 1790 proclaimed her new Constitution, was welcomed with acclamations which it is probably impossible for us, at the distance of a century, quite to realize. "Bliss was it," exclaimed Wordsworth, "in that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven!" How far short France came of leading in a



golden age is a matter of history. Some, like Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, whom she disappointed and horrified, despairing of popular government, sought refuge in traditional authority and conservatism. Others, like Shelley, refusing to recognize in the failure of France the failure of the grand idea of a Universal Brotherhood, clung to the idea, and cherished it, and flashed it alluringly in the eyes of England; or, like Byron, attacked the foundations of old authority, without in the meantime troubling themselves much about what the new régime should be.

But the great thing to notice in this matter of the French Revolution as an influence upon our literature is the flooding of new emotions and new ideas which it poured into society. From those emotions and those ideas sprang much that is best in the poetry of the nineteenth century. From them our poets derived their passion, their energy, their earnestness; these are everything in art, which without them is only artifice. The Napoleonic wars, by stirring the feelings, and inspiring the mind with a succession of fresh ideas, are to be regarded as a continuation of that influence upon English literature which the Revolution began. Other influences were at work: collections of the old ballads, such as Percy's *Reliques*, inspired the whole genius of Scott, and the new German literature, creeping at first in the form of wild romantic ballads into the country, and commanding attention later in the nobler creations of Goethe and Schiller, powerfully affected for both good and evil the speculations of Coleridge, and the method, material of thought, and even the manner of Carlyle. Political agitation at home, around the Corn Laws, the Reform Bill, etc., had its due effect, directly and indirectly, upon both poetry and fiction.

The subject of nineteenth-century poetry has been pretty equally divided between Nature and Man. The return of poetry to nature, begun by Thomson and quickened by Cowper and Burns in the preceding century, was consummated by Wordsworth ; and the study of nature received such an impetus as still continues, and it is not likely soon to die out. Among the most forcible describers of natural scenery, after Wordsworth, are Scott and Byron ; and much of the poetry of Tennyson reflects the features of English landscape. Nature has been truly and freshly presented, but the interpretation of her aspects has varied. Wordsworth, and to some extent Shelley, give a spiritual interpretation ; to Scott she is arrayed in the hues of romance ; Byron finds in her storms and calms a reflection of his own changing moods ; her sensuous beauty appeals to Keats ; Tennyson is content to stand aloof and photograph with artistic clearness her more graceful or interesting attitudes. Narrative poetry full of adventure and incident, and often powerful characterization, has been largely cultivated by all the leading poets of the century, from Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* and Byron's *Eastern Tales* to Tennyson's *Idyls of the King* and Morris's *Earthly Paradise*. Lyrical poetry, especially the ballad form of it, is a notable feature of nineteenth-century verse, and it is well exemplified in Scott's *Eve of St. John* at the commencement of the period, and Tennyson's *The Revenge*, or Kipling's *Ballad of East and West*, at the close. Latterly, our poets have gone back to classical and mediæval times for narrative subjects. But there has been no neglect of themes of practical and speculative interest. Like the novel, poetry, perhaps unhappily, has invaded the fields of science and philosophy.

The style of poetry has been remarkably modified in

the course of the century. At the beginning it was characterized by an unconventional freedom both of form and expression, illustrated in the verse of Wordsworth, Scott, Byron, and Shelley; towards the close it has become more condensed and correct, more polished and artistic. The change began with Keats, whose *Eve of St. Agnes* inaugurated the Literary or Artistic School of poetry. With the minutely faithful observation of Wordsworth and the Lake School, Tennyson combines, but with developments of his own, the artistic style of Keats. While the style has thus undergone a change, it has always—except in the solitary instance of Browning—carried music and melody. Browning is picturesque, but his verse refuses to sing—it is a jumble of jars and discords. Swinburne, on the other hand, is nothing if he is not melodious.

The nineteenth century is remarkable for its fertility in fiction. When the century began the Novel was monopolized by the Minerva Press—an utterly depraved school of silly or stupid sentimentalists. Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen set about the destruction of this school, and when Scott entered the lists with his magnificent romances it shrank and disappeared. Dickens and Thackeray inaugurated the novel of modern life, and “George Eliot” ably continued it. The domestic novel, which is now in vogue, is not nearly exhausted; Mrs. Oliphant is perhaps its most popular exponent. The novel of adventure has been revived by Hag-gard, and is at present in the hands of Louis Stevenson. A new species of novel, dealing with the passions and prejudices, the haunts and habits, of obscure villagers and rustics—the local novel, as it might be called—is finding much acceptance with a large number of the reading public. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, by

Thomas Hardy, and *The Little Minister*, by J. M. Barrie, are the most popular of this class. Galt or George Macdonald should be regarded as the originator of the local novel. The religious novel, such as *Robert Elsmere*, by Mrs. Humphry Ward, is a remarkable feature of current fiction, and probably owes its origin to the scepticism of the age. Kipling has recently aroused a wide and keen interest in India and the British soldier by his audaciously realistic Anglo-Indian tales and sketches.

Literary dramatic writing for the stage seems to be a lost art in England. The greatest geniuses of the period have attempted to restore the drama, but with absolute or comparative failure. Scott's plays will neither read nor act. Byron's at the best are magnificent poems. Shelley's *The Cenci* is one of the most powerful tragedies of modern times, but the subject debars it from the stage. Browning, whose genius was essentially dramatic, wrote several dramas—*Strafford*, *King Victor and King Charles*, and *A Blot on the 'Scutcheon*—but none of them has been quite successful. The same is to be said of Tennyson's *Queen Mary*, *Harold*, *The Falcon*, *The Cup*, and *Becket*; they contain excellent poetical passages, but are unsuited for the popular taste. Swinburne's *Chastelard* is a poem rather than a play, and neither *Bothwell* nor *Mary Stuart* has secured a footing. The least unsuccessful writers for the theatre have been Sheridan Knowles, Talfourd (author of *Ion*), Sir Henry Taylor (author of *Philip van Artevelde*), Bulwer Lytton, whose *Lady of Lyons* has still a fair measure of popularity, Wills (author of *Charles the First*), and Tom Taylor, who wrote or translated about one hundred dramatic pieces, of which *Still Waters Run Deep* and *'Tiswixt Axe and Crown* are among the best. The plays of Jerrold,

Planché, Robertson, Pinero, and Gilbert can hardly be called literature.

The prose of the period has made new and notable developments, especially exemplified in criticism and the essay. Lamb has well sustained the best traditions of the English essay, to which he has added graces all his own. De Quincey is one of the greatest masters of harmonious English prose. The same praise is merited by Ruskin and Swinburne, both producing marvellous effects—the former with a singular simplicity of diction, the latter with something of the abundant pomp of Milton blended with the musical sweetness of Jeremy Taylor. In history remarkable powers of pictorial description have been displayed by Macaulay, and in scarcely less degree by Froude, Kinglake, and Green. They have made fact as fascinating as fiction. Brilliancy of style in this department has gone hand in hand with elaborate research and painstaking accuracy. Hallam, Carlyle, Masson, Stubbs, Freeman, and Gardiner have more especially subjected the selected periods of their study to the most searching investigation. But the same spirit of inquiry and analysis has entered into the entire literary work of the age. It is one of the most striking characteristics of the period. In science, where such a spirit is essential, it has not been unaccompanied by high qualities of style. The pens of Tyndall and Huxley have produced a literature of science scarcely less attractive than the literature of imagination.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF THE PRINCIPAL AUTHORS

- I. *Poets*.—WORDSWORTH, SCOTT, COLERIDGE, BYRON, SHELLEY, KEATS, TENNYSON, and BROWNING.

*Other Poets*.—ROGERS, HOGG, SOUTHEY, LANDOR, CAMPBELL, MOORE, HOOD, MRS. BROWNING, AYTOUN, MATTHEW ARNOLD, WILLIAM MORRIS, and SWINBURNE. *Also* LONGFELLOW, WHITTIER, WHITMAN, etc.

- II. *Writers of Fiction*.—SCOTT, THACKERAY, and DICKENS.  
*Other Novelists*—DISRAELI, LYTTON, READE, CHARLOTTE  
 BRONTË, KINGSLEY, "GEORGE ELIOT," etc.
- III. *Critics and Essayists*.—DE QUINCEY, CARLYLE, and RUSKIN.  
*Others*—JEFFREY, LAMB, HAZLITT, WILSON, etc.
- IV. *Biographers and Historians*.—MACAULAY. *Also* HALLAM,  
 GROTE, FROUDE, BUCKLE, FREEMAN, KINGLAKE, GREEN,  
 etc.
- V. *Philosophers, etc.*—STUART MILL, DARWIN, SPENCER, TYN-  
 DALL, HUXLEY, etc.

## POETS

## POETS LAUREATE OF THE PERIOD, 1789-1894

|                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Thomas Warton . . . .     | Laureate from 1788 to 1790 |
| Henry James Pye . . . .   | " " 1790 to 1813           |
| Robert Southey . . . .    | " " 1813 to 1843           |
| William Wordsworth . .    | " " 1843 to 1850           |
| Alfred, Lord Tennyson . . | " " 1850 to 1892           |

One of the most original and influential of the poets of the nineteenth century was **William Wordsworth** (1770-1850), at once the interpreter of nature and of human life. He was the second of a family of five children—four sons and a daughter—born to John Wordsworth and his wife Anne Cookson. John Wordsworth was an attorney, and agent for the Lonsdale estates, at Cockermouth, in Cumberland, and it was there the poet was born; and there and at Penrith he spent his infancy and early boyhood. His mother died when he was eight years of age, he being then, as he describes himself, a boy "of a stiff, moody, and violent temper"; and he was sent to the free grammar-school at Hawkshead, in the vale of Esthwaite, North Lancashire. He had a happy school-time, chiefly because he was left at liberty to read and roam about very much as he liked. His poem *The Prelude* minutely describes his mode of life and method of study, his boating, riding, and skating excursions, his country rambles alone or in company with his school-fellows, his communion with nature, and the growth within him of "the spirit of religious love in which he walked with nat-



ure." Like his Wanderer in *The Excursion*, a poem which also is colored with his own youthful reminiscences, he early felt the power and rejoiced in the presence of nature. Dread mingled with his joy.

"I would stand,  
If the night blackened with a coming storm,  
Beneath some rocks, listening to notes that are  
The ghostly language of the ancient earth,  
Or make their dim abode in distant winds."

It was Hawkshead that made Wordsworth a poet; all his after-work was essentially the outcome of his youthful experiences there. Before his seventeenth year he was feeling a personal love for nature, and his faith in the pre-existing harmony between nature and man was established. It was at Hawkshead that he first began to write verses. Happy in his life and its surroundings, he was no less fortunate in one of his teachers, William Taylor, whose character and influence are commemorated in *Matthew*, *The Two April Mornings*, and *The Fountain*.

His father had died, leaving the family affairs in a somewhat embarrassed state, when Wordsworth was a boy of fourteen. His relatives, however, sent him to St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1787; and there he remained—studying indeed, but mostly according to a scheme of his own—till his graduation four years later. The French Revolution was in progress during and after his undergraduateship; and so enthusiastic was his interest in the patriot side that he went to live in France, and, identifying himself with the Girondists, whose aim was a republic, narrowly escaped the guillotine, the fate of many of his friends. Before many years his political faith underwent a complete change, and he who had been a fervid Republican developed into a strong Conservative. He returned to England in 1792, after an absence of about sixteen months, and in 1793 published separately *An Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches*, his first poems, both in rhymed pentameter—the latter an account of a walking-tour in Switzerland in the long vacation of

1790. Neither attracted any attention; but Wordsworth's serene self-appreciation sustained him through this and many a subsequent neglect.

After much hesitation as to his future course in life, Wordsworth at last gave up the idea of entering the Church, or qualifying for the legal profession, or becoming a journalist; a legacy of £900 left him by a young friend, Raisley Calvert, finally determined him to a life of independency and poetry. He at once settled, with his devoted sister Dorothy, first at Racedown, in Dorsetshire, in 1795; then at Alfoxden, in Somersetshire (to be near Coleridge), in 1797. In 1798 he left the south of England, and after a memorable visit to the Wye valley and a winter spent in Germany, returned to England in the spring, and was settled for good, with his sister, in his native Lake District as the year 1799 was drawing to a close. Before leaving Alfoxden, however, it is noteworthy that he had published, at Bristol (in 1798), the now famous *Lyrical Ballads*, which, though containing the *Lines Written at Tintern Abbey*, with many other characteristic pieces, and Coleridge's great contribution, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, drew little or no attention for several years.

Wordsworth's home, for the last fifty years of his life, was among the English lakes, first at Dove Cottage and afterwards at Allan Bank, at Grasmere, and then, from 1813 onward, at Rydal Mount, the locality chiefly associated with his name. In 1800 he published an enlarged edition, in two volumes, of the *Lyrical Ballads*, to which he prefixed what Coleridge called a "valuable preface," containing the germ of his poetical theory. The year 1802 is memorable in the annals of his life for at least three important events—the payment of a debt to the Wordsworth family of about £8000 by the young Earl of Lonsdale, the poet's marriage to Mary Hutchinson, and the commencement of his great poem *The Excursion*. In 1813 his independency was still further secured by his appointment to the distributership of stamps for Westmoreland, an office which was virtually a sinecure, worth £500 a year. In the following year *The Ex-*

*curSION* was published, and *The White Doe of Rylstone, or The Fate of the Nortons*, an historical poem, came out the year after. The honors which came to him in his later years included an honorary degree from Oxford in 1839, a government pension of £300 in 1842, and the laureateship, in succession to Southey, in 1843. Wordsworth's life at Grasmere and Rydal, though mainly one of quiet and regular poetical activity, was varied by visits to France, Germany, Wales, Ireland, and Italy; and by five tours in Scotland, of which the first was made in 1803 and the last in 1833. His residence in the Lake District brought around him many poetical friends and admirers, of whom Coleridge and Southey were the chief, and to them began to be applied the somewhat vague and misleading title of Lakists, or poets of the Lake School. The one great sorrow of Wordsworth's old age was the death (1847) of his daughter Dora, to whom he was much attached. He himself died a few days after completing his eightieth year, in April, 1850, and was buried in Grasmere church-yard. He left behind him in manuscript two important poems in blank-verse—the one, *The Prelude*, published in 1850; the other, to which the title of *The Recluse* has been given, so late as 1888.

In addition to the larger poems of Wordsworth already mentioned, he wrote numerous sonnets, many of passing or only limited interest, but some of great and permanent power and beauty; several pieces illustrative of his Scottish tours, more especially *The Solitary Reaper*, *Rob Roy's Grave*, and the Yarrow poems; lyrical fragments and finished pieces of delicate beauty, such as the verses on Lucy, and *The Cuckoo*; many didactic and descriptive poems, possessed of what has happily been called a "healing power," of which *Resolution and Independence* (or *The Leech-Gatherer*) and the *Ode to Duty* are notable examples; simple narratives in verse on subjects connected with children and childhood, like *Lucy Gray* and *We are Seven*; a noble ode on *Intimations of Immortality*; the classical poem—unique among his poetry—of *Laodamia*; and poems *On the Naming of Places in the Lake District*. Wordsworth is

eminently a meditative or philosophical poet, and his poetry is mainly the expression of "emotion recollected in tranquillity." Two innovations he introduced and sought to practise—not always with the best results: he held that the humblest subjects were suitable for poetry (hence his *Peter Bells* and *Alice Fells* and *Idiot Boys*); and he discarded the conventional poetic diction which had grown up in the eighteenth century, and held that the language of poetry should be that "really used by men."

His great merit lies in completing the return of poetry to nature, which had been begun by Thomson, and continued by Cowper and Burns; his favorite theme was the influence of nature on man, of which he had a new and peculiar interpretation to give. Nature to him was a living thing, the expression of a universal spirit, which communicated its own thoughts in direct impulses to man through the medium of hills and valleys, starry skies and flowing streams, vernal woods, and even the meanest flowers; on those thoughts and impulses he reverently brooded till he was in harmony with the great benevolent spirit, and found peace and happiness; and hence the deep, strong, and abiding love with which he studied Nature and sought truthfully to reproduce her aspects. "It is the feeling," he used to say, "that instructs the seeing; wherever there is a heart to feel there is an eye to see."

The chief characteristics of Wordsworth's poetry have been specified by Coleridge: (1) An austere purity of language; (2) a weight, sanity, and freshness of thought; (3) a *curiosa felicitas* of diction; (4) an utter truthfulness of natural description; (5) a meditative pathos; and (6) a graceful fancy, and an imaginative power that brings him nearest of all modern writers to Shakespeare and Milton. His masterpiece is *The Excursion*. It is a didactic poem in nine books, dealing with the problem of humanity. Wordsworth's hope of the elevation of man was not founded upon revolutions or legislation, but upon individual lives. "What one becomes why may not thousands be?" was his question. *The Excursion* is a slender narrative of the adventures of

two friends, the Recluse (the poet himself) and the Wanderer, among the scenes and inhabitants of the Lake District, with ample discussions on nature and human nature by them and other two typical characters, the Solitary and the Parson. It was intended as part of a larger poem, to be called *The Recluse*, fragments of which remained in MS. when the poet died. Jeffrey was believed to have crushed *The Excursion* in *The Edinburgh Review*. "He crush *The Excursion*!" exclaimed Southey; "he might as well think to crush Skiddaw!"

"The hazels rose  
Tall and erect, with milk-white clusters hung,  
A virgin scene!— . . . Then up I rose  
And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash  
And merciless ravage; and the shady nook  
Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,  
Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up  
Their quiet being: and, unless I now  
Confound my present feelings with the past,  
Even then, when from the bower I turned away  
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,  
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld  
The silent trees and the intruding sky.—  
Then, dearest maiden! move along these shades  
In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand  
Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods."

—*Nutting.*

"The world is too much with us; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:  
Little we see in Nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!  
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;  
The winds that will be howling at all hours  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;  
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be  
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn;  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;  
Have sight of Proteus coming from the sea;  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn."

—*Miscellaneous Sonnets.*

"She dwelt among the untrodden ways  
 Beside the springs of Dove,  
 A maid whom there were none to praise,  
 And very few to love.  
 A violet by a mossy stone  
 Half-hidden from the eye !  
 —Fair as a star, when only one  
 Is shining in the sky.  
 She lived unknown, and few could know  
 When Lucy ceased to be ;  
 But she is in her grave, and, oh,  
 The difference to me !"

—*Poems Founded on the Affections.*

"He spake of love, such love as spirits feel  
 In worlds whose course is equable and pure ;  
 No fears to beat away—no strife to heal—  
 The past unsighed for, and the future sure ;  
 Spake, as a witness, of a second birth  
 For all that is most perfect upon earth :

"Of all that is most beauteous—imaged there  
 In happier beauty ; more pellucid streams,  
 An ampler ether, a diviner air,  
 And fields invested with purpureal gleams ;  
 Climes which the sun, who sheds the brightest day  
 Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey."

—*Laodamia.*

"Stern lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear  
 The Godhead's most benignant grace ;  
 Nor know we anything so fair  
 As is the smile upon thy face :  
 Flowers laugh before thee on their beds ;  
 And fragrance in thy footing treads ;  
 Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;  
 And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are fresh and  
 strong."

—*Ode to Duty.*

"It is the first mild day of March ;  
 Each minute sweeter than before.  
 The redbreast sings from the tall larch  
 That stands beside our door.



"There is a blessing in the air,  
Which seems a sense of joy to yield  
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,  
And grass in the green field. . . .

"One moment now may give us more  
Than fifty years of reason :  
Our minds shall drink at every pore  
The spirit of the season.

"Some silent laws our hearts may make,  
Which they shall long obey :  
We for the year to come may take  
Our temper from to-day."

—*Poems of Sentiment and Reflection.*

"I love the brooks, which down their channels fret,  
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;  
The innocent brightness of a new-born day  
Is lovely yet ;  
The clouds that gather round the setting sun  
Do take a sober coloring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;  
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.  
Thanks to the human heart by which we live ;  
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears ;  
To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

—*Ode : Intimations of Immortality.*

"Will no one tell me what she sings ?  
Perhaps her plaintive numbers flow  
For old unhappy far-off things  
And battles long ago !"

—*Solitary Reaper.*

"Thou, that didst appear so fair  
To fond imagination,  
Dost rival in the light of day  
Her delicate creation :  
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,  
A softness still and holy ;  
The grace of forest charms decayed,  
And pastoral melancholy.

“That region left, the vale unfolds  
 Rich groves of lofty stature,  
 With Yarrow winding through the pomp  
 Of cultivated nature ;  
 And, rising from those lofty groves,  
 Behold a ruin hoary !  
 The shattered front of Newark’s Towers,  
 Renowned in Border story.

“Fair scenes for childhood’s opening bloom,  
 For sportive youth to stray in ;  
 For manhood to enjoy his strength,  
 And age to wear away in ! . . .  
 I see—but not by sight alone,  
 Loved Yarrow, have I won thee ;  
 A ray of fancy still survives—  
 Her sunshine plays upon thee ! . . .  
 And well I know, where’er I go,  
 Thy genuine image, Yarrow !  
 Will dwell with me—to heighten joy,  
 And cheer my mind in sorrow.”

—*Yarrow Visited.*

The greatest Scottish name in literature is that of **Walter Scott** (1771–1832) ; and it is one of the greatest in European history of the nineteenth century. Scott is to Scotland what Shakespeare is to England, Goethe to Germany. It is not in respect of general excellence alone that he is worthy of comparison with Shakespeare. There are other points of resemblance. As a man, he had the same large-hearted humanity, the same healthy enjoyment of life, the same perfect sanity of genius. To both Scott and Shakespeare life was more than literature. As writers, both were possessed of a strong and vivid historical imagination, and a power of swift and sustained production astonishing beyond all record. Scott’s imagination, like Shakespeare’s, lived and delighted in the past. To both the past was a land of inexhaustible romance. Scott roamed from century to century with the familiar knowledge and ease with which one passes from street to street of his native town. [ “All is great,” said Goethe, “in the Waverley novels—material, effect, characters, execution.” If Shakespeare turned out his

three dramatic masterpieces per year, Scott was not less equal to the annual task of three masterpieces in fiction. His pen ran free and unrestrained; like Shakespeare, he "never blotted a line." *Guy Mannering* was the work of only six weeks; the last two volumes of *Waverley* were written in the evenings of three summer weeks; *The Bride of Lammermoor* was finished in two. Where he differs from Shakespeare is in the want of speculative power. But his characters are as life-like, his scenes and incidents as dramatic, as those of Shakespeare; it is only in his dramas that Scott's dramatic faculty fails and forsakes him.

Scott belonged to the Harden branch of the great Border family which acknowledges the bold Buccleuch as its head. He was descended from Mary Scott, "the Flower of Yarrow," and he was also descended from "muckle-mou'd Meg" of Elibank. He was come of a male ancestry of raiders and rievvers, and the instinct for battle and enterprise ran in his blood. He lived, however, in the weak piping times of peace, and was a member of a profession whose function it is to maintain law and order; and the outlet of action being denied to his genius, he sought and found an outlet for it in art. The hereditary bent shows itself in his battle-pieces; here he is Homeric. He stands pre-eminent, the poet of action.

Scott's father, also named Walter, was a *douce, canny* Scottish attorney (he figures in *Redgauntlet* as the elder Fairford), of the class known in the North Country as "Writers to the Signet"; his mother, Anne Rutherford, was the daughter of a medical professor of Edinburgh University; and it was in the Old Town of Edinburgh ("mine own romantic town") that Scott was born, on the 15th of August. He was one of a family of twelve children, of whom only two survived their mother. Six died young, before Scott was born. Scott himself, though he lived to be one of the strongest men of his time, was a weakly child, and subject to fits of illness in his boyhood. In extreme youth, through a fever, he lost for some time the power of his right leg, and was, like Byron, always lame—though in manhood

his lameness never interfered with his freedom; he could walk thirty or forty miles a day. It was the custom of his parents, when he was ailing, to send him to Tweedside to recover; and there, at Sandyknowe, his grandfather's farm, or at Kelso, in the house of a relative, the worlds of natural beauty and historical romance opened to receive him. The scenery of Tweedside and the ballads of the Border made him a poet. But for a long time he was content to feel poetry without feeling the impulse to express it. "The tree [at Kelso] is still in my recollection beneath which I lay and first entered upon the enchanting perusal of Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, . . . but I had never dreamed of an attempt to imitate what gave me so much pleasure."

After five years' irregular attendance at high school—unprofitable save for the education of the playground, the fights and the friendships of boyhood, and the *bickers* in the streets on the way to and from school—Scott entered the University of Edinburgh at the age of thirteen, but to scarcely any better advantage. He was never a scholar. Like Shakespeare, he knew a little Latin, and less Greek; and as his style shows, without the need of his confession, he "never learned grammar." Yet he was, even then, possessed of such an amount of history and poetry, collected at hap-hazard in his own unsystematic way, as would have enriched his teachers and professors. Next to the old ballads his favorites were Froissart and Boccaccio, Spenser and Shakespeare. By-and-by, as soon as he felt the magic of foreign tale and song, he mastered in a manner sufficient for his purpose—which was never that of a scholar—the languages of Germany, Spain, Italy, and France. He only read those languages for the treasures they contained. It was from the German romantic ballads of Bürger, as introduced to Edinburgh society by Mrs. Barbauld, that Scott first received the impulse to try his hand at verse composition. Accordingly, in 1796, at the age of twenty-five, he made his first appearance as author—"prevailed on *by request of friends* to indulge his own vanity by publishing the translation of

*Lenore* [ *William and Helen* ], with that of *The Wild Huntsman*, in a thin quarto."

Scott was at this time an advocate, or barrister, not at all troubled with clients, and amusing himself with yeomanry drill on Portobello sands. At the age of fifteen he had been apprenticed to the law in his father's office, and had been duly called to the bar on attaining his majority. But his heart was wholly given to poetry. His delight was in the long summer and autumn vacation. Six of these in succession, beginning his first raid into Liddesdale the year he first wore wig and gown, he spent enthusiastically among the moors and dales of the Southern Lowlands, gathering ballads and legends, exploring old camps and ruined peels, and studying in all its phases the rough independent life of Border shepherds and farmers. But the enjoyment of those raids was their prime attraction to Scott. All his life, to a love of romance he added a boy's hearty relish of freedom and the country. Wherever he went in his rambles, his honest face, frank manners, and generous feeling found him friends; whoever looked on him liked him.

Scott's first love-affair was unfortunate, and he never quite got over the disappointment. It affected his health, and some of his friends thought he must die; but after bearing his grief about two years he was sufficiently heart-whole to marry Charlotte Carpenter, a lady of French extraction but educated in England, whom he first met at a watering-place in Cumberland. The marriage took place at Carlisle, on Christmas Eve, 1797, and they lived in a cottage-house at Lasswade. Two years later, his father having died in the interval, Scott was glad to receive the appointment of sheriff-depute for Selkirkshire at a salary of £300. In the same year he wrote for "Monk" Lewis's *Tales of Wonder* another translation from the German, and, better still, his original ballads of *The Eve of St. John* and *Glenfinlas*. In 1802-1803 the fruit of Scott's vacation raids was seen in *The Border Minstrelsy*, in three volumes, copiously annotated. In the task of collecting material for this famous magazine of Border ballads, Scott had been assisted by

many friends in different stations of life, but chiefly by Hogg and Leyden and Willie Laidlaw. In 1804, consequent on his sheriffship, Scott removed from Lasswade to Ashestiel, a small but comfortable house situated on a high wooded bank of Tweed. Here he lived till Abbotsford House was built.

It was at Ashestiel that Scott entered upon his career as a minstrel, by the composition of his famous metrical romances. *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805) made him at once the most popular poet of the day. *Marmion* followed in 1808, and *The Lady of the Lake* in 1810. Scott's name was now in everybody's mouth. Between the appearance of *The Lay* and *Marmion*, Scott had been appointed to a clerkship in the Court of Session—a post which was presently worth £800 a year to him. With his professional income and the gains from his books, and especially the prospect of greater gains, he now began to cherish an ambition to own land and become a laird. Whatever would advance the scheme was adopted. He entered into secret partnership with the Ballantynes in the business of printing and publishing, and redoubled his literary industry. He was forty when he bought the first lands of Abbotsford. It was—before Scott reclaimed and named it—a bleak, bare, swampy stretch of farmland, with an evil name; but it bordered beloved Tweed, and the locality was rich in associations. Here he built Abbotsford House—a romance in stone. It was the great delight of Scott's life to embellish and extend Abbotsford, and entertain his friends there in princely style. This he was able to do by the enormous income he received from his novels and prose romances.

He had turned to prose, without abandoning verse, a year or two after the publication of *The Lady of the Lake*. He never again in verse reached the success of that popular poem. Byron had appeared, and the public turned to salute the rising sun. But indeed Scott's verse had begun to pall, and his skill at the same time lost its first cunning; *Rokeby* (1812) was a comparative failure, *The Lord of the Isles* (1815) was coldly received, and *Harold the Dauntless* (1817)



was scarcely noticed. But with *Waverley* (in 1814) he surprised and recaptured a delighted world, and went on, in the long, brilliant series of novels and romances that followed *Waverley*, from greater to still greater triumphs, dazzling and delighting. In 1813 Scott had declined the offer of the laureateship in favor of Southey. In 1820 he was made a baronet. His poems and novels do not represent the whole of Scott's labors during this busy time. He was careful in attending to his professional duties; in politics and other current interests he took an active part; he contributed reviews to *The Edinburgh*, and when that periodical, in 1808, permitted an unjustly severe criticism of *Marmion* (from the pen of Jeffrey), he set about the foundation of *The Quarterly*; he edited Dryden in 1808, Swift in 1814, and some years later (in 1825) undertook an elaborate biography of Napoleon; and from time to time he made voyages and journeys—to the Hebrides (1814), to London and Paris (in 1815, and again in 1827), and to Ireland (in 1824).

In 1826 he was overtaken by a great reverse of fortune. The firm of Ballantyne & Co. failed, Scott was implicated, and found himself at fifty-five saddled with a debt of about £130,000. He gave up Abbotsford, refused to compound with his creditors, and, taking for his motto "Time and I against any two," mustered his energies, and, working fourteen hours a day, applied himself to the herculean task of repaying by his pen every penny of the debt. He continued the novels, wrote *The Tales of a Grandfather*—a picturesque history of Scotland—and tried his hand at dramatic composition. His brain gave way under the terrible strain. In 1830 he had a stroke of paralysis, from which he never recovered. But the work he had done proved more than sufficient to pay all his debts. In 1831 he was conveyed to Malta and Italy in a frigate, placed at his disposal by the government; at Naples he attempted to resume his literary labors, but his power was gone; he came home to Abbotsford, and there, within sight and sound of the river he loved so well, he died, surrounded by friends, on the 21st of September, 1832. He was buried in Dry-

burgh Abbey beside his wife, who had died in the year after his great loss. His last memorable words, uttered on the morning of his death, were, "To-night I shall know all."

Scott was a rapid and careless writer, who aimed only at broad general effects. His best poems are *The Lay, Marmion*, and *The Lady of the Lake*, and the best passages in these describe action and the wild energy of battle. Next to his narrative power comes his power in describing scenery. The midnight gallop of William of Deloraine; the battle of Flodden; and the Stag-hunt, the Expedition of the Fiery Cross, the duel between Fitz-James and Roderick Dhu, and the battle of Beal' an Duine are characteristic specimens of his narrative power. His pictorial power is well exemplified in his description of Loch Katrine. His most finished verse is lyrical, and includes *Bonnie Dundee*, *Jock o' Hazeldean*, *Lochinvar*, *Pibroch of Donuil Dhu*, *The Eve of St. John*, and *Rebecca's Hymn*, in the romance of *Ivanhoe*. These are among the freshest and most spirited or most musical of modern English lyrics. His favorite measure was a more or less irregular verse of four accents. He adopted and developed it from Coleridge's *Christabel*, which he had read ten years before its publication. Love of country, and the feeling of clanship—a modified form of patriotism—constituted the ruling passion of Scott, and were the deepest source of his poetry.

"Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said  
    'This is my own, my native land !'  
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned  
As home his footsteps he hath turned  
    From wandering on a foreign strand?  
If such there be, go, mark him well:  
For him no minstrel-raptures swell;  
High though his titles, proud his name,  
Boundless his wealth, as wish can claim.  
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,  
The wretch, concentred all in self,  
Living shall forfeit fair renown,  
And, doubly dying, shall go down

To the vile dust from whence he sprung  
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung !

“ O Caledonia ! stern and wild,  
Meet nurse for a poetic child !  
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,  
Land of the mountain and the flood,  
Land of my sires ! what mortal hand  
Can e'er untie the filial band  
That knits me to thy rugged strand ?”

—*The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

“ No longer Autumn's glowing red  
Upon our Forest hills is shed ;  
No more, beneath the evening beam,  
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam :  
Away hath passed the heather-bell  
That bloomed so rich on Needpath Fell ;  
Sallow his brow, and russet bare  
Are now the sister-heights of Yair.  
The sheep, before the pinching heaven,  
To sheltered dale and down are driven,  
Where yet some faded herbage pines,  
And yet a watery sunbeam shines :  
In meek despondency they eye  
The withered sward and wintry sky,  
And far beneath their summer hill,  
Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill :  
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,  
And wraps him closer from the cold ;  
His dogs no merry circles wheel,  
But, shivering, follow at his heel ;  
A cowering glance they often cast,  
As deeper moans the gathering blast.”

—*Introduction to Marmion.*

“ And O ! loved warriors of the Minstrel's land !  
Yonder your bonnets nod, your tartans wave !  
The rugged form may mark the mountain band,  
And harsher features, and a mien more grave ;  
But ne'er in battle-field throbb'd heart so brave  
As that which beats beneath the Scottish plaid ;  
And when the pibroch bids the battle rave,  
And level for the charge your arms are laid,  
Where lives the desperate foe that for such onset stayed ?”

—*The Vision of Don Roderick.*

"Sweet are the paths, O passing sweet !  
By Eske's fair streams that run,  
O'er airy steep, thro' copsewood deep,  
Impervious to the sun.

"There the rapt poet's step may rove,  
And yield the muse the day ;  
There Beauty, led by timid Love,  
May shun the telltale ray ;

"From that fair dome, where suit is paid  
By blast of bugle free,  
To Auchendinny's hazel glade,  
And haunted Woodhouselee.

"Who knows not Melville's beechy grove,  
And Roslin's rocky glen,  
Dalkeith, which all the virtues love,  
And classic Hawthornden?"

—*The Gray Brother.*

"There is a nun in Dryburgh bower  
Ne'er looks upon the sun ;  
There is a monk in Melrose tower,  
He speaketh word to none.

"That nun who ne'er beholds the day,  
That monk who speaks to none—  
That nun was Smaylho'me's Lady gay,  
That monk the bold Baron."

—*The Eve of St. John.*

"Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife !  
To all the sensual world proclaim,  
One crowded hour of glorious life  
Is worth an age without a name."

—*Old Mortality.*

To intellectual and imaginative ability of the first order Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834) united an infirmity of purpose which marred the splendid promise of his youth. The amount of his verse is comparatively small ; it is of unequal quality, and much of it is fragmentary ; yet it contains

a proportion of such pure and exquisite poetry as sufficiently warrants his claim to the title of a great poet. "All that he did excellently," says Mr. Stopford Brooke, "might be bound up in twenty pages, but it should be bound in pure gold."

He was born in the parish of Ottery St. Mary, in Devonshire, where his father was vicar, and he was educated at Christ's Hospital, London, where Charles Lamb was one of his school-fellows. Even as a boy he was a great reader and dreamer, without any inclination for play, without even the scholar's ambition to excel. Though an admirable Grecian, he was content to become a shoemaker, and was about to apprentice himself to that humble calling when the headmaster interfered, and he was sent, in his nineteenth year, to Jesus College, Cambridge. Here he stayed for two years, and gained some distinction for a Greek prize-ode; but he was an erratic student, and displeased the college authorities by his sympathy with the principles of the French Revolution; besides, he had fallen into debt, and now he fell in love. In despair he ran away from college, and enlisted in a regiment of Light Dragoons under an assumed name, which preserved his initials—Silas Tomkins Comberbach. After four months' misery in barracks he was bought off by his friends. Shortly afterwards he made the acquaintance of Southey, with whom, and some other kindred souls all afire with revolutionary ideas, he planned at Bristol the return of the golden age in a Pantisocratic society in America. The experiment was to be made on the shores of the Susquehanna; all were to be equal, all were to work with their hands and to devote their leisure to literature, and neither priest nor king was to burden the new commonwealth. But the experiment was not made—for want of money.

Coleridge now took to public lecturing, and to editing a journal of prose and verse, *The Watchman*, which, however, would not sell. He married one of the Miss Frickers, and was living in a cottage at Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire. It was here he became associated with Wordsworth; and here he spent two or three of the happiest years of his life,

poetizing and dreaming. He was still young — and “Life went a-maying with Nature, Hope, and Poesy.” His best poetical work was done or begun in those precious years. Here he wrote *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, the first part of *Christabel*, and *The Ode to the Departing Year* (1795). *The Ancient Mariner* was first published, as one of Coleridge’s contributions to *The Lyrical Ballads*, in 1798. That same year the generosity of some admirers enabled Coleridge to go to Germany, where he studied German literature, and (unhappily) German metaphysics. When he returned to England it was to find his friends Wordsworth and Southey settled in the Lake District. He joined them, becoming an inmate in the house of his brother-in-law Southey, at Keswick. It was now that he published his poetical translation of Schiller’s drama, *The Life and Death of Wallenstein* — believed to be the only translation which has improved on the original work. Meanwhile he was writing for *The Morning Post*. In 1804 he was for several months secretary to the Governor of Malta. After a tour in Italy he came back to the English Lakes, and resumed lecturing and editing. His second journal, *The Friend*, was only a little less unsuccessful than *The Watchman*; but it contained a great deal of excellent criticism, along with much profound, if not always very intelligible, metaphysics. In 1816 he published *Christabel*. Of his prose works the most notable, perhaps, are some *Lay Sermons*, *Biographia Literaria* (1817), and *Aids to Reflection* (1825).

It had long been manifest that, with his precarious means, Coleridge’s character was too irresolute, and his life too irregular, to enable him to maintain himself. He had now become enslaved to opium; his reluctance to write increased; the grand hopes of his youth fled; “sense of past youth and manhood come in vain, and genius given and knowledge won in vain,” oppressed without rousing him. He became dependent on the charitable hospitality of pitying admirers. The last nineteen years of his life were passed in the house of Mr. James Gillman, a surgeon, at Highgate, near London.



This house was long the weekly haunt of young literary London, attracted to it by the philosophical talk—oracular in a double sense—of the “old man eloquent.”

To a strong power of beautiful and sublime imagination Coleridge added a wonderful charm of rhythm and melody. His best qualities will be found in *The Ancient Mariner*—a weird tale of the sea, written in the irregular measure of the old ballad; *Christabel*, less popular than *The Mariner*, but the most perfect, though only a fragment, of all Coleridge’s poetical work; it is a romance of love and hate, in which the sensuous and the supernatural are strangely blended, and is written in a peculiar measure, based not on numbers but on a principle of accent; various odes, especially *The Ode to the Departing Year*, and *Dejection—An Ode*; a *Hymn before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni*, Miltonic in the rapturous force of its jubilation; *Khubla Khan*, composed in a dream, a marvellous fragment of harmony and imagery; and such short pieces as *Youth and Age*, *Love*, and *The Ballad of the Dark Ladie*, which reveal the exquisitely tender side of his genius.

“The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,  
The furrow followed free;  
We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent sea.

“Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,  
’Twas sad as sad could be;  
And we did speak only to break  
The silence of the sea!

“All in a hot and copper sky  
The bloody sun, at noon,  
Right up above the mast did stand,  
No bigger than the moon.

“Day after day, day after day,  
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean.

“Water, water, everywhere,  
And all the boards did shrink ;  
Water, water, everywhere,  
Nor any drop to drink.”  
—*The Ancient Mariner*.

“O sweeter than the marriage-feast,  
’Tis sweeter far to me  
To walk together to the kirk  
With a goodly company !—  
To walk together to the kirk,  
And all together pray,  
While each to his great Father bends,  
Old men, and babes, and loving friends  
And youths and maidens gay !  
Farewell, farewell ! but this I tell  
To thee, thou wedding-guest !  
He prayeth well, who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast.  
He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small ;  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all.”  
—*Ibid*.

“’Tis the middle of the night by the castle clock,  
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock ;  
Tu-whit !—Tu-who !  
And hark, again ! the crowing cock,  
How drowsily it crew. . . .

“The night is chilly, but not dark.  
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,  
It covers but not hides the sky.  
The moon is behind, and at the full ;  
And yet she looks both small and dull.  
The night is chill, the cloud is gray :  
’Tis a month before the month of May,  
And the Spring comes slowly up this way. . . .

“The night is chill, the forest bare ;  
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak ?  
There is not wind enough in the air  
To move away the ringlet curl  
From the lovely lady’s cheek—  
There is not wind enough to twirl

The one red leaf, the last of its clan,  
That dances as often as dance it can,  
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,  
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky."

—*Christabel*.

"Verse, a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,  
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—  
Both were mine! Life went a-maying  
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,  
When I was young!  
When I was young?—Ah, woful when!  
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!  
This breathing house not built with hands,  
This body that does me grievous wrong,  
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands  
How lightly then it flashed along:—  
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,  
On winding lakes and rivers wide,  
That ask no aid of sail or oar,  
That fear no spite of wind or tide!  
Nought cared this body for wind or weather  
When Youth and I lived in't together."

—*Youth and Age*.

**George Gordon, Lord Byron** (1788-1824), the most famous English poet of aristocratic birth, was born in London, the only child of Captain John Byron of the Guards, and his wife Catherine Gordon, of Gight, in Aberdeenshire. He was unhappy in both his parents; his father was utterly reckless and dissipated, and his mother was weak, vain, and passionate to the verge of madness. The boy was brought up in very humble circumstances in Aberdeen from his second to his eleventh year, and acquired a passion for wild mountain scenery which he never afterwards lost, and never ceased to associate with Scotland: "Lochnagar, with Ida, looked o'er Troy." In 1798 he succeeded, on the death of his grand-uncle, to the title of Lord Byron and the family estates of Newstead in Nottingham. His education was now transferred to a preparatory school near London, where he was fitted for Harrow; and in 1805 he was admitted to Trinity College, Cambridge. At the university, where he remained two years, he was more distinguished for his love

of athletics and his eccentricities than for study; in spite of his lameness he practised out-door sports, cricket, and rowing; and among other irregularities within the college he insisted on keeping bull-dogs and a bear.

He had already been composing verses at Harrow, inspired by nature and the passion of boyish love—more especially a passionate but silent attachment, in his fifteenth year, for Mary Chaworth; and now, before he was twenty, he published his first volume of verse under the title of *Hours of Idleness*. It was by no means a promising effort, but the onslaught made upon it by Brougham in *The Edinburgh Review* was quite unjustified. The merciless critique roused the indignation of Byron, and indignation inspired a reply in the brilliantly rhetorical satire *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, written not only in the Popian couplet, but with much of the force and point of Pope. It was an effective Parthian shot.

Byron immediately withdrew from England for a two years' cruise and tour among the seas and peninsulas of Southern Europe; and on his return gave superior assurance of his poetic power by the publication of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*, a poem, in the Spenserian measure, descriptive of the scenes through which he had lately passed, and the impressions they had left on his mind. He awoke and found himself famous. The sudden favorite of fashionable London, he was flattered and fêted on every hand. He was only too much inclined to accept the universal adulation, and entered upon a course of dissipation, which ended, as it could only end, in satiety and disgust. He was not, however, idle; his visit to the Mediterranean shores continued to inspire him with fresh themes for poetry, and he threw off in rapid and dazzling succession *The Giaour* and *The Bride of Abydos* (1813), *The Corsair* and *Lara* (1814)—Turkish metrical tales of wild and novel adventure, before which the more wholesome but less sensational rhymed romances of Scott seemed to pale. Meanwhile Byron had taken his seat, and spoken, but without exciting much interest, in the House of Lords.

He had married (1815), when at the height of his popularity, Miss Milbanke, the daughter of a Durhamshire baronet; but they had been united only a year when the lady, alleging as her reason his cruelty or madness, refused to live with him. Public feeling, without much judgment in the matter, was on her side. Byron suddenly found himself the object of a storm of execration from all quarters, and haughtily withdrew forever from England in 1816, declaring that either he was unfit for England, or England was unfit for him. Before his departure he published his *Hebrew Melodies*, *The Siege of Corinth*, and *Parisina*. It was the outcry against him that once more stimulated him to poetical activity. He proceeded to Switzerland by the Rhine, and, coming to Italy, spent the most of the remaining eight years of his life in wild irregularity at Venice, Pisa, Leghorn, etc. In Italy he made the acquaintance of Shelley, and never ceased to keep up his connection with poetry. It was at Venice, at the age of thirty, that he finished *Childe Harold*—the concluding canto giving still greater testimony of the magnificent energy of his poetical genius. He had already written *The Prisoner of Chillon*, *The Lament of Tasso*, and the tragedy of *Manfred*. He was afterwards to write *Sardanapalus* and *Cain*, both of them dramas; *Beppo* and *The Vision of Judgment*; and sixteen cantos of *Don Juan*. The Greek war of independence aroused and enlisted his sympathies in 1823, and he went to Greece to give personal aid to the cause of freedom, when he was struck down by fever, and died at Missolonghi in his thirty-seventh year.

The expression of Byron comes with a rush; energy is its distinguishing quality, and next to that are its variety, copiousness, and melodious ease. Both Nature and Man were his theme. It was the reflection of his own moods in nature that charmed him, and he was never so happy as when contemplating the fierce freedom and wild turbulency of the elements. His descriptions of the passive strength of mountains, and the contending fury of seas and cataracts, and all the sublime mysteries of night and storm and

darkness, are magnificent and unmatched. His interpretation of Man underwent a remarkable development. At first it was mainly a sympathetic exposition of his own greatly magnified and wholly undeserved woes, accompanied with ineffable scorn of the vulgar pursuits and pleasures of mankind. He posed in the foreground of his magnificent natural descriptions in the various guises of *Childe Harold* and *Lara*, *Manfred* and *Cain*. But in *Don Juan* he flings off the trammels of a mysterious and misanthropical personality; he escapes from self, and delineates with wit, satirical humor, and wonderful power of penetration into character, all the varying phases of human life and society. His true vocation here reveals itself as that of the reforming humorist, whose weapon is satire; and, while objection may be taken on the score of morality to the methods he employed, the result, as a work of art, must be confessed to be a masterpiece. The development from self to society in his treatment of Man is marked by a corresponding change in the form and tone of his verse; he gave up the romantic Spenserian and other dignified measures for the infinitely more free and flexible *ottava rima*. It is supposed, with some reasonableness, that if Byron had lived longer he would have combined prose with verse, or found, like Scott, that prose could be made the freer, speedier, and even more effective vehicle of poetry.

“ There’s not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,  
 When the glow of early thought declines in feeling’s dull decay;  
 ’Tis not on youth’s smooth cheek the blush alone which fades  
     so fast,  
 But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be  
     past. . . .

“ Oh! could I feel as I have felt—or be what I have been,  
 Or weep as I could once have wept, o’er many a vanished scene;  
 As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish though  
     they be,  
 So midst the withered waste of life, those tears would flow  
     to me.”  
     —*Stanzas for Music.*



“ Adieu, adieu ! my native shore  
 Fades o’er the waters blue ;  
 The night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,  
 And shrieks the wild sea-mew.  
 Yon sun that sets upon the sea  
 We follow in his flight :  
 Farewell awhile to him and thee,  
 My native land—good-night ! . . .

“ With thee, my bark, I’ll swiftly go  
 Athwart the foaming brine ;  
 Nor care what land thou bear’st me to,  
 So not again to mine.  
 Welcome, welcome, ye dark blue waves !  
 And when you fail my sight,  
 Welcome, ye deserts and ye caves !  
 My native land—good-night ! ”  
 —*Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*, canto i.

“ There was a sound of revelry by night,  
 And Belgium’s capital had gathered then  
 Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright  
 The lamps shone o’er fair women and brave men ;  
 A thousand hearts beat happily ; and when  
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,  
 Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,  
 And all went merry as a marriage bell ;  
 But hush ! hark ! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell !

“ Did ye not hear it ? No ; ’twas but the wind,  
 Or the car rattling o’er the stony street ;  
 On with the dance ! let joy be unconfined ;  
 No sleep till morn when youth and pleasure meet  
 To chase the glowing hours with flying feet.  
 But hark !—that heavy sound breaks in once more,  
 As if the clouds its echo would repeat ;  
 And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before !  
 Arm ! arm ! it is—it is—the cannon’s opening roar ! ”  
 —*Ibid.*, canto iii. 21, 22.

“ The sky is changed !—and such a change ! O night,  
 And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,  
 Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light  
 Of a dark eye in woman ! Far along,  
 From peak to peak, the rattling crags among

Leaps the live thunder ! Not from one lone cloud,  
 But every mountain now hath found a tongue ;  
 And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,  
 Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud !

“ And this is in the night : Most glorious night !  
 Thou wert not sent for slumber ! let me be  
 A sharer in thy fierce and far delight—  
 A portion of the tempest and of thee !  
 How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,  
 And the big rain comes dancing to the earth !  
 And now again 'tis black ; and now, the glee  
 Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,  
 As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.”  
 —*Ibid.*, canto iii. 92, 93.

“ I see before me the Gladiator lie :  
 He leans upon his hand—his manly brow  
 Consents to death, but conquers agony,  
 And his drooped head sinks gradually low—  
 And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow  
 From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,  
 Like the first of a thunder-shower ; and now  
 The arena swims around him : he is gone,  
 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hailed the wretch who won.

“ He heard it, but he heeded not : his eyes  
 Were with his heart, and that was far away ;  
 He recked not of the life he lost nor prize,  
 But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,  
 There were his young barbarians all at play,  
 There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,  
 Butchered to make a Roman holiday—  
 All this rushed with his blood—Shall he expire,  
 And unavenged ?—Arise ! ye Goths, and glut your ire !”  
 —*Ibid.*, canto iv. 140, 141.

“ Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean—roll !  
 Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain ;  
 Man marks the earth with ruin—his control  
 Stops with the shore ;—upon the watery plain  
 The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
 A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
 When for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
 He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,  
 Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.”  
 —*Ibid.*, canto iv. 179.

“Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell—  
 Then shrieked the timid, and stood still the brave—  
 Then some leaped overboard with dreadful yell,  
 As eager to anticipate their grave;  
 And the sea yawned around her like a hell,  
 And down she sucked with her the whirling wave,  
 Like one who grapples with his enemy,  
 And strives to strangle him before he die.

“And first one universal shriek there rushed,  
 Louder than the loud ocean, like a crash  
 Of echoing thunder; and then all was hushed,  
 Save the wild wind and the remorseless dash  
 Of billows; but at intervals there gushed,  
 Accompanied with a convulsive splash,  
 A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry  
 Of some strong swimmer in his agony.”  
 —*Don Juan*, canto ii.

“O Hesperus! thou bringest all good things—  
 Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer,  
 To the young bird the parent's brooding wings,  
 The welcome stall to the o'erlabored steer.  
 Whate'er of peace about our head-stone clings,  
 Whate'er our household gods protect of dear,  
 Are gathered round us by thy look of rest;  
 Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's breast.

“Soft hour! which wakes the wish and melts the heart  
 Of those who sail the seas, on the first day  
 When they from their sweet friends are torn apart;  
 Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way,  
 As the far bell of vesper makes him start,  
 Seeming to weep the dying day's decay:  
 Is this a fancy which our reason scorns?  
 Ah! surely nothing dies but something mourns.”  
 —*Ibid.*, canto iii.

**Percy Bysshe Shelley** (1792-1822) was the son and heir of a wealthy Sussex baronet. More even than Byron was he a product of the French Revolution. Born in 1792, he was permeated by the spirit of that wild time from his childhood. It animated and directed the energies of his youth in a rebellious aggressive struggle with almost every form of

recognized authority. His life-long attitude towards the past and its traditionary customs and institutions was one of decided antagonism. All his hopes were rooted in the future, all his joys were among its possibilities. The picturesque past in which Scott's genius loved to luxuriate had no attraction for him. His golden age was in the future, and he bent the whole of his passionate energies to hasten its coming.

At Eton he set himself in opposition to his teachers and his school-fellows; in the class-room he refused to follow the prescribed order of lessons; in the playground he objected to fag. In his preface to *The Revolt of Islam* he tells us that the voices of the school-room were already in his ear but "one echo from a world of woes—the harsh and grating strife of tyrants and of foes." His antagonism to the established systems of education was more pronounced when he went to Oxford. He cared to learn nothing that his "tyrants" knew or taught, but took earnestly to forbidden courses of study, and became sceptical in religion and revolutionary in politics. He had the courage of his convictions. At the age of seventeen he challenged the university authorities to a discussion of his heretical opinions. He circulated a pamphlet to which he gave the title of *The Necessity of Atheism*, and he wrote the atheistical poem of *Queen Mab*.

Expelled from Oxford, and disowned by his father as a reprobate, he contracted a Gretna Green marriage in his nineteenth year with Harriet Westbrook, a girl of sixteen, the daughter of a retired innkeeper. Within three years he abandoned his wife and her two children. The stain on his conduct, which time has failed to cleanse, lies here. In her despondency Harriet Westbrook committed suicide, and only a few weeks after the event Shelley married Mary Godwin, daughter of Godwin the novelist. Society avenged itself by a decree of the Court of Chancery, which deprived the poet of the custody of his children. He continued to offend society by the audacity of his opinions, as expressed more or less allegorically in his poetry and metrical metaphysics. He never departed from his early convictions, but kept

pushing and promulgating them with the full power of his maturing genius. After producing *Alastor* (1816) and *The Revolt of Islam* (1818)—the latter written in friendly rivalry with Keats, whose rival poem was *Endymion*—Shelley removed to Italy for the remainder of his short life.

Under the inspiration of "that divinest climate" he wrote those astonishing masterpieces, the lyrical drama of *Prometheus Unbound* (1820), and the appalling tragedy of *The Cenci* (1819), along with such a body of other sublime and beautiful verse as would make famous any age in which it appeared. In Italy he became acquainted with Byron, and the masterly poem of *Julian and Maddalo* commemorates one of their conversations. His poetical work in Italy also includes *The Witch of Atlas*, *Epipsychidion*, *Adonais* (a lament for Keats), *Hellas*, and the *Hymn to Mercury*. But it is his lyrics that keep him popular—such as *The Cloud*, *To a Skylark*, *Arethusa*, *Ode to the West Wind*, *The Pine Forest*, and *The Sensitive Plant*. His short life of thirty years came to a sudden end. His boat went down, or was run down, in a storm on the Bay of Spezia, when he was returning with some friends to Lerici from a visit to Leigh Hunt, at Leghorn. His body was recovered, and cremated on the beach; and the ashes were entombed, under the simple inscription *Cor Cordium*, in the Protestant burial-ground at Rome.

Shelley's life shows a record singularly free from vice. No happier home probably ever existed than the home which he and Mary Godwin established in Italy. The profession of benevolence is broadcast in his writings—the virtue was at no time absent from the practice of his daily life. His sympathy with the poor and oppressed was habitually shown by his frequent visits to their cottages, his considerate counsel and interest in their affairs, his gifts and numerous acts of service, his willingly offered friendship. He preached the equality of man, and he proved that he was willing to practise it. His great idea was the perfectibility of mankind; but perfection could never be attained through Church or State, which, constituted as he

found them, he regarded as traditionary trammels invented by the few for the subjection of the many. They were obstacles in the path of human progress, to be battered down and removed. This was the aggressive side of his teaching. He was not opposed to religion as he understood it; but between the practice of the Church and its professed aims he saw a huge and hideous contrast. The Church preached the millennium, the golden age of his own dreams, but it devoted its energies to the enjoyment of its present power—it had found its millennium; what more did it need? In the language of Milton, it “was sped.” Shelley was at one with Wordsworth in looking for the regeneration of society to the perfection of the individual. He had no faith in State machinery; the State was only what individuals made it. Finding here and there in all ages of the world’s history individual lives of true nobility, he reasoned:

“Why is this noble creature to be found  
One only among thousands? What one is  
Why may not mankind be?”

This was the reasoning that convinced Shelley of the perfectibility of man, and filled his imagination with dreams of a future earthly paradise.

At least one other doctrine of Wordsworth’s was the creed of Shelley—the sympathy of mute nature with the spirit of man. Man had broken away from, was at least out of touch with, this sympathy, and the regeneration of the race was in progress wherever, between the individual and nature, the bond was re-established. Good, universal good, would be the result when the spirit of love in man was at last wedded to the waiting and long-expectant spirit of love in nature. This belief in a living and loving Nature accounts for the numerous glowing descriptions of natural scenes which form such a prominent feature of the poetry of Shelley.

The style of Shelley is admirably expressive of the qualities of his genius. It is the natural embodiment of his



thought. Subtlety and sublimity of idea were never better represented than in his free and fluent lines. His element, like Ariel's, is the air—whither it is not seldom fatiguing to follow his flights, and whence one returns with a sense of relief to the more mundane world, to rest on the glen-side with Scott or buffet the sea-billows with Byron.

“Emily,

A ship is floating in the harbor now,  
A wind is hovering o'er the mountain's brow;  
There is a path on the sea's azure floor,  
No keel has ever ploughed that path before;  
The halcyons brood around the foamless isles;  
The treacherous Ocean has forsworn its wiles;  
The merry mariners are bold and free:  
Say, my heart's sister, wilt thou sail with me?  
Our bark is as an albatross, whose nest  
Is a far Eden of the purple East;  
And we between her wings will sit, while Night  
And Day, and Storm, and Calm pursue their flight,  
Our ministers, along the boundless sea,  
Treading each other's heels, unheededly.”

—*Epipsychidion*.

“I love all waste

And solitary places, where we taste  
The pleasure of believing what we see  
Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be:  
And such was this wide ocean, and this shore  
More barren than its billows; and yet more  
Than all, with a remembered friend I love  
To ride as I then rode;—for the winds drove  
The living spray along the sunny air  
Into our faces; the blue heavens were bare,  
Stripped to their depths by the awakening north;  
And, from the waves, sound like delight broke forth  
Harmonizing with solitude, and sent  
Into our hearts ærial merriment.  
So, as we rode, we talked; and the swift thought,  
Winging itself with laughter, lingered not,  
But flew from brain to brain—such glee was ours,  
Charged with light memories of remembered hours,  
None slow enough for sadness: till we came  
Homeward, which always makes the spirit tame.”

—*Julian and Maddalo*.

“ We look before and after,  
And pine for what is not :  
Our sincerest laughter  
With some pain is fraught ;  
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

“ Better than all measures  
Of delightful sound,  
Better than all treasures  
That in books are found,  
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground !

“ Teach me half the gladness  
That thy brain must know,  
Such harmonious madness  
From my lips would flow,  
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.”  
—*To a Skylark*

“ We wandered to the pine foréſt  
That skirts the ocean’s foam,  
The lightest wind was in its nest,  
The tempest in its home.

“ The whispering waves were half asleep,  
The clouds were gone to play,  
And on the woods, and on the deep,  
The smile of Heaven lay.

“ It seemed as if the day were one  
Sent from beyond the skies,  
Which shed to earth above the sun  
A light of Paradise.”  
—*The Pine Forest.*

“ He has outsoared the shadow of our night ;  
Envy and calumny, and hate and pain,  
And that unrest which men miscall delight,  
Can touch him not and torture not again  
From the contagion of the world’s slow stain  
He is secure, and now can never mourn  
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray in vain ;  
Nor, when the spirit’s self has ceased to burn,  
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

“ He lives, he wakes—’tis Death is dead, not he;  
 Mourn not for Adonais.—Thou, young Dawn,  
 Turn all thy dew to splendor, for from thee  
 The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;  
 Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!  
 Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air,  
 Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown  
 O’er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare  
 Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair.

“ He is made one with Nature ; there is heard  
 His voice in all her music, from the moan  
 Of thunder, to the song of night’s sweet bird ;  
 He is a presence to be felt and known  
 In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,  
 Spreading itself where’er that Power may move  
 Which has withdrawn his being to its own ;  
 Which wields the world with never-wearied love,  
 Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above. . . .

“ The One remains, the many change and pass;  
 Heaven’s light forever shines, Earth’s shadows fly ;  
 Life, like a dome of many-colored glass  
 Stains the white radiance of eternity.”

—*Adonais*.

In the same cemetery at Rome where are laid the ashes of Shelley, who survived only to lament his friend’s early death, lie the mortal remains of **John Keats** (1796-1821), a poet of great promise and of no uncertain performance. He was born in the house of his grandfather, who kept a livery-stable at Moorfield, was educated at Enfield, and apprenticed in his fifteenth year to a surgeon at Edmonton. His bent of mind, however, was to poetry ; he knew and admired Virgil, revelled in Spenser, and made his first acquaintance with Greek poetry forever memorable by a sonnet of rare imaginative power and beauty entitled *On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer*. The beauty of Greek literary art he knew only through the medium of English, yet no one was ever more fully informed with the spirit of Greek poetry. Its mythological legends furnished him with his most con-

genial themes and inspired his best efforts. *Endymion*, published in 1818, *Lamia*, and the magnificent Miltonic fragment of *Hyperion*, published in 1820, with the inimitable *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, were the outcome of his study, or rather intuition, of classical life in ancient Greece. He also explored the rich fields of mediæval romance, from which he returned with a harvest of such exquisite poetry as is comprised in *Isabella, or The Pot of Basil*, *The Eve of St. Agnes*, and the fragmentary *Eve of St. Mark*.

When *Endymion* first appeared it was savagely attacked in *The Quarterly Review* by a writer whom Shelley stigmatized as "a noteless blot on a remembered name." Keats keenly felt the injustice and even brutality of the attack, and there seems no reason to doubt that it quickened, if it did not create, the disease of which he died. But other than literary cares—the illness of a brother, whom he sedulously tended, and an unfortunate love attachment—harassed a mind naturally supersensitive, and tried a constitution naturally delicate. Under the care of his devoted artist friend, Joseph Severn, the poet sought health in Italy, but went thither only to die. He was not more than twenty-five at the time of his death.

Though fetching his themes from ancient times, Keats, in the matter of style, is altogether modern. He is the founder of what has been called the literary or artistic school of poetry, and his influence is still manifest on the art of living writers. He wrote unaffected by the spirit of the times in which he lived. Byron's sphere was the present, Shelley expatiated on the future, but Keats turned to the past, and found refuge and rest in a world of departed beauty. Sensuous beauty was the great object of his worship and delight; the opening verse of his own *Endymion* is the key-note of his poetry—"A thing of beauty is a joy forever." Fitting, therefore, was his last resting-place under "the vault of blue Italian day," and on "a slope of green access"—

"Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead

A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread."

The cemetery, wrote Shelley, is an open space among the ruins of Rome, "covered with violets and daisies. It might make one in love with death to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place."

"Leading the way, young damsels danced along,  
 Bearing the burden of a shepherd's song;  
 Each having a white wicker, overbrimmed  
 With April's tender younglings : next, well-trimmed,  
 A crowd of shepherds with as sunburnt looks  
 As may be read of in Arcadian books;  
 Such as sat listening round Apollo's pipe,  
 When the great deity, for earth too ripe,  
 Let his divinity o'erflowing die  
 In music, through the vales of Thessaly :  
 Some idly trailed their sheep-hooks on the ground,  
 And some kept up a shrilly mellow sound  
 With ebon-tipped flutes : close after these,  
 Now coming from beneath the forest trees,  
 A venerable priest full soberly,  
 Begirt with ministering looks : alway his eye  
 Steadfast upon the matted turf he kept,  
 And after him his sacred vestments swept."

—*Endymion*.

"As men talk in a dream, so Corinth all,  
 Throughout her palaces imperial,  
 And all her populous streets and temples lewd,  
 Muttered, like tempest in the distance brewed,  
 To the wide-spreaded night above her towers.  
 Men, women, rich and poor, in the cool hours,  
 Shuffled their sandals o'er the pavement white,  
 Companioned or alone ; while many a light  
 Flared, here and there, from wealthy festivals,  
 And threw their moving shadows on the walls,  
 Or found them clustered in the corniced shade  
 Of some arched temple door, or dusky colonnade."

—*Lamia*.

"Deep in the shady sadness of a vale  
 Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,  
 Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,  
 Sat gray-haired Saturn, quiet as a stone,  
 Still as the silence round about his lair ;

Forest on forest hung about his head  
 Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,  
 Not so much life as on a summer's day  
 Robs not one light seed from the feathered grass,  
 But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest.  
 A stream went voiceless by, still deadened more  
 By reason of his fallen divinity  
 Spreading a shade: the Naiad 'mid her reeds  
 Pressed her cold fingers closer to her lips.

Along the margin-sand large footmarks went,  
 No further than to where his feet had strayed,  
 And slept there since. Upon the sodden ground  
 His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,  
 Unscathed; and his realmless eyes were closed;  
 While his bowed head seemed listening to the Earth,  
 His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

It seemed no force could wake him from his place;  
 But there came one, who with a kindred hand  
 Touched his wide shoulders, after bending low  
 With reverence, though to one who knew it not."

—*Hyperion*.

"Who are these coming to the sacrifice?

To what green altar, O mysterious priest,  
 Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,  
 And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?  
 What little town by river or sea-shore,  
 Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,  
 Is emptied of its folk this pious morn?  
 And, little town, thy streets for evermore  
 Will silent be; and not a soul to tell  
 Why thou art desolate, can e'er return."

—*Ode on a Grecian Urn*.

"Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,  
 And many goodly states and kingdoms seen,  
 Round many Western islands have I been  
 Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.  
 Oft of one wide expanse had I been told  
 That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne;  
 Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
 Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:  
 Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
 When a new planet swims into his ken;



Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
 He stared at the Pacific—and all his men  
 Looked at each other with a wild surmise—  
 Silent, upon a peak in Darien.”

—*On First Looking into Chapman's Homer.*

“ ‘Hark ! ’tis an elfin-storm from faery land,  
 Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed :  
 Arise—arise ! the morning is at hand ;—  
 The bloated wassailers will never heed :  
 Let us away, my love, with happy speed ;  
 There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—  
 Drowned all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead :  
 Awake ! arise ! my love, and fearless be,  
 For o’er the Southern moors I have a home for thee.’ ”

“ She hurried at his words, beset with fears,  
 For there were sleeping dragons all around,  
 At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—  
 Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found.  
 In all the house was heard no human sound.  
 A chain-drooped lamp was flickering by each door ;  
 The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,  
 Fluttered in the besieging wind’s uproar ;  
 And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

“ They glide like phantoms into the wide hall !  
 Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide  
 Where lay the Porter in uneasy sprawl  
 With a huge empty flagon by his side :  
 The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,  
 But his sagacious eye an inmate owns :  
 By one and one, the bolts full easy slide ;—  
 The chains lie silent on the footworn stones ;  
 The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

“ And they are gone : ay, ages long ago  
 These lovers fled away into the storm.  
 That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe ;  
 And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form  
 Of witch and demon and large coffin-worm,  
 Were long be-nightmared. Angela the old  
 Died palsy-twitched, with meagre face deform ;  
 The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,  
 For aye unsought-for slept among his ashes cold.”

—*The Eve of St. Agnes.*

**Alfred Lord Tennyson** (1809–1892) was the third of a large family of children, of whom seven were sons, born to the Rev. George Clayton Tennyson and Elizabeth Fytche, his wife. Dr. Tennyson, distinguished for his personal strength and stature, and for his love of music, was rector of Somersby, and it was there, in the wolds of Mid-Lincolnshire, that the poet was born. But he was not the only poet of the family: his elder brothers, Frederick and Charles, were also possessed of the poetical faculty, and published verse of considerable merit. It was under the encouragement of Charles, his favorite brother, that Alfred wrote his earliest verses while still a mere child, and it was in conjunction with him that he first appeared before the public in a slender volume, published in 1826, entitled *Poems by Two Brothers*. The book attracted little attention, but the father of the young poets predicted for Alfred a great career.

After a classical training at Louth, near Somersby, Alfred was sent in 1828 to Trinity College, Cambridge, and distinguished himself there by a prize-poem in blank-verse on the subject of Timbuctoo. At college, among his other intimate companions, were men afterwards known to fame, such as Dean Alford, Lord Houghton, Professor Lushington, and Arthur Henry Hallam—the last the son of the historian, and the subject of one of the finest elegies in the English language—*In Memoriam*. In the year of his majority (1830) Tennyson again ventured before a public slow to offer him a welcome, though the new book of verse contained some charming lyrics, such as *The Ballad of Oriana*, *Recollections of the Arabian Nights*, and *Mariana in the Moated Grange*. Next year his father died, and his college course was interrupted.

He now paid a visit to the south of France, and on his return issued another volume of Lyrics (in 1833), which showed, in *The May Queen*, *Lady Clara Vere de Vere*, *The Lotus-Eaters*, etc., the great advance he had made in poetical expression. This volume was worthy of a warmer reception than the critics or the public gave it, and the poet sang

only to himself for the next nine years. During this interval of silence he made London his home, but from time to time maintained his relations with nature by many excursions in Lincolnshire.

At last, in 1842, by the publication of *Poems* in two volumes, he caught the ear of the public; and he has kept it ever since. Even Wordsworth, then near the end of his long and honored career, and always chary of praise to a contemporary, owned that he "was decidedly the first of our living poets." Among the contents of those two volumes were *Locksley Hall*, *The Gardener's Daughter*, and the first preludings on the great Arthurian theme—*Morte d'Arthur*. In 1847 he greatly improved his position among English poets by *The Princess—a Medley*. It is a species of epic in blank-verse, interspersed with lyrics, of marvellous melody, in which the earnest treatment of a great question—the intellectual equality of women with men—is almost concealed under playful touches of satire.

In 1833 young Hallam, then a student of law, and engaged to one of the poet's sisters, had unexpectedly died at Vienna in his twenty-second year. His loss, which was keenly felt, gave Tennyson one of his greatest themes. Night and day for several years he brooded over his sorrow, and found relief in "the sad mechanic exercise" of expressing it in "measured language." The ultimate result was a long series of much over a hundred elegiac strains, expressive of the varying moods of the mourner, from bitter anguish of heart to placid resignation, and bearing the simple title *In Memoriam A. H. H.* The measure, though he did not invent it, he has made his own; it is a quatrain of iambic octosyllabics, the rhymes falling agreeably with the formula—*a b b a*. The poem was published in 1850, and assured to the author the foremost place among living poets.

The year was otherwise memorable in the poet's history. It was the year of his marriage with Emily Sellwood, and of his accession to the laureateship. His work proper as laureate included the composition of poems on passing events of great public interest; but on those themes, which

were rather forced upon him than left to his free choice, he has not been too successful, though exception may be made in favor of portions of an *Ode on the Death of Wellington* (1852), and more especially his spirited *Charge of the Light Brigade*, written in 1854. On his marriage Tennyson settled at Twickenham, whither he returned from a flying visit with his wife to Northern Italy. But in 1853 he transferred his household to Farringford, in Freshwater, a parish on the southwest coast of the Isle of Wight. Farringford remained his only residence till 1870, when he began to make summer and autumn migrations to Aldworth, near Haslemere, in Surrey, where he had built for himself another house on the heights of Blackdown.

His long residence at Farringford was one of close poetical seclusion, from which he seldom emerged into society. He had all his life an almost morbid aversion to society, though in the course of his bachelor wanderings he mixed and talked freely with strangers to whom he was unknown. To those in the great world whom he admitted to his confidence he could be "sweet as summer." His poetry reflects the scenery of his chosen haunts. The "glooming flats" of Lincolnshire, its "level wastes and rounding grey," appear in his early poems; every one will recall in *The May Queen* his realistic description of the summer airs blowing "cool from the dry dark wold" over sword-grass and reed-grass and "the bulrush in the pool." A new character of scenery, caught from the Isle of Wight, shows itself in his later verse. He himself has sketched the landscape at Farringford:

"Groves of pine on either hand  
To break the blast of winter stand.  
And further on, the hoary channel  
Tumbles a billow on chalk and sand."

From his island nest the poet made from time to time many flights—to Cornwall and Dartmoor, to North Wales, to Yorkshire; to the crags of Argyleshire and the islets of the Inner Hebrides; to Southern France, a twice-repeated visit; and to the land of Goethe, where in 1865 he visited Wei-

mar and Dresden. In 1883 he made a visit with the prime-minister to Copenhagen, and recited some of his poetry to the Danish court. In 1884 he was raised to the peerage amid the congratulations of the nation.

His poetical vein, to use the metaphor of Milton, never ceased to flow, down to the year of his death. Its natural force showed scarcely any sign of abatement. Year by year to the last he added fresh laurels to his crown; year after year he rose in popular favor and national esteem. His poetical work at Farringford is a long and brilliant record of varied triumphs. *Maud—a Monodrama*, appeared in 1855; *The Idyls of the King*, commencing with the first four in 1858, and extending by instalments to the number of twelve, were completed in 1886; *Enoch Arden* and *Aylmer's Field* were issued in 1864. In 1875 Tennyson, at the age of sixty-six, entered on his career as a dramatist; in that year was published his *Queen Mary*; *Harold* followed two years later; then came *The Falcon*, acted in 1879, and *The Cup*, in 1881; *Becket* appeared in 1884; and subsequently, though of less note, his domestic drama of *The Promise of May*, followed in 1892 by *The Foresters*—a dramatic treatment of the Sherwood legend of Robin Hood. There were in addition volumes of lyrics and ballads, tales in dialect, and poems dealing with the profoundest subjects in science and philosophy. Some of these may be specified: *Tiresias* appeared in 1885; *Locksley Hall*, *Sixty Years After*, in 1886; *Demeter* in 1889.

Tennyson not only preserved his poetical activity and vigor to the end of his long, happy, and honorable career, but enjoyed the delights of travel so late as 1891, in which year he paid a visit to Devonshire. Death came calmly at last; in his own beautiful metaphor, he “crossed the bar” and “put out to sea” as he had wished—without any “moaning of the tide.” He died in his Surrey house at Aldworth in October, 1892, aged eighty-three years and two months, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. The title went to his elder son Hallam; the younger, Lionel, predeceased his father by six years. Shortly after Tennyson's

death the last of his poems were published under the title of *The Death of Ænone, Akbar's Dream, and Other Poems*.

One of the most striking features of the ample work of Tennyson is the great range of his themes. They are mostly English—English characters, English incidents, English landscapes. And next after English subjects is his preference for classical ones. A not less striking feature of his poetry is the great variety of his measures. There is scarcely a kind he has not tried, and he has been successful in all. He has besides invented new rhythms, and discovered—even in blank-verse—new harmonies. No poet has equalled him in the power of adapting style to subject; invariably with Tennyson subject and style are hand in glove. The general characteristics of his style are pictorial clearness, musical smoothness, and rich, often romantic, melody. He is the poet of finish. But there is no want of force, both intellectual and impassioned—conveyed now in the abundant, impetuous, and glowing imagery of *Locksley Hall*, and now in the simple and severe massiveness of outline in the more heroic of the *Idyls*. In lyrical and narrative poetry he excels; it is only in the drama that he has failed to achieve success. His lyrics cover nearly the whole lyrical circuit—song, ballad, ode, and elegy. Notable among the ballads is *The Revenge—a Ballad of the Fleet*. There is a great range from the rapid force and fire of that noble ballad to the simple pathos of *The May Queen*. But his prevailing note is the pathetic. His narrative skill is variously, yet always charmingly, shown in *The Princess*, *Enoch Arden*, and *The Idyls of the King*. His observation of nature is profound, and accurate to the tiniest detail. It is chiefly in a sense of humor that Tennyson is weak; he seems unable to express humor without the aid of dialect.

Apart from the shorter pieces which first wafted Tennyson into fame, his best work is probably to be seen in *The Princess*, *In Memoriam*, and *The Idyls*. In the last-named Tennyson followed for the most part the *Morte Darthur* of Mallory (Caxton's translation, 1485). He follows Mallory, and Geoffrey of Monmouth, in his conception of Arthur as



blameless. The *Idyls* are essentially tales, but there is an ever-recurring suggestion of allegory, "shadowing sense at war with soul." The characters, too, personify certain moral qualities in action. Jealousy is delineated in Geraint, Endurance in Enid, Holiness or Purity in Galahad, Guilty Love in Lancelot, etc. The healthy moral influence of Tennyson's poetry is not its least recommendation.

"I am going a long way  
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—  
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)  
To the island-valley of Avilion;  
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,  
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies  
Deep meadowed, happy, fair with orchard-lawns  
And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea,  
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

—*Morte d'Arthur.*

"For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would  
be;

"Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

"Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rained a ghastly  
dew  
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

"Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing  
warm,  
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-  
storm;

"Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-flags  
were furled  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

"There the common-sense of most shall hold a fretful realm  
in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law."  
—*Locksley Hall.*

“Break, break, break,  
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea !  
And I would that my tongue could utter  
The thoughts that arise in me.

“O well for the fisherman’s boy,  
That he shouts with his sister at play !  
O well for the sailor lad,  
That he sings in his boat on the bay !

“And the stately ships go on  
To their haven under the hill ;  
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still !

“Break, break, break,  
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !  
But the tender grace of a day that is dead  
Will never come back to me.”

---

“The splendor falls on castle walls,  
And snowy summits old in story :  
The long light shakes across the lakes,  
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

“O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, farther going !  
O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying :  
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.”  
—*The Princess.*

“The path by which we twain did go,  
Which led by tracts that pleased us well,  
Thro’ four sweet years arose and fell,  
From flower to flower, from snow to snow :

“And we with singing cheered the way,  
And, crowned with all the season lent,  
From April on to April went,  
And glad at heart from May to May :

"But where the path we walked began  
 To slant the fifth autumnal slope,  
 As we descended following Hope,  
 There sat the Shadow feared of man ;

"Who broke our fair companionship,  
 And spread his mantle dark and cold,  
 And wrapt thee formless in the fold,  
 And dulled the murmur on thy lip,

"And bore thee where I could not see  
 Nor follow, tho' I walk in haste,  
 And think, that somewhere in the waste  
 The Shadow sits and waits for me."

—*In Memoriam.*

"Last May we made a crown of flowers : we had a merry day ;  
 Beneath the hawthorn on the green they made me Queen of  
 May ;  
 And we danced about the may-pole and in the hazel copse  
 Till Charles's Wain came out above the tall white chimney-  
 tops.

"There's not a flower on all the hills : the frost is on the  
 pane :  
 I only wish to live till the snowdrops come again :  
 I wish the snow would melt, and the sun come out on high :  
 I long to see a flower so before the day I die.

"The building rook'll caw from the windy tall elm-tree,  
 And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea,  
 And the swallow will come back again with summer o'er  
 the wave,  
 But I shall lie alone, mother, within the mouldering grave."  
 —*New-Year's Eve* (The May Queen).

"Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,  
 Thy tribute wave deliver :  
 No more by thee my steps shall be,  
 Forever and forever.

"Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,  
 A rivulet then a river :  
 Nowhere by thee my steps shall be,  
 Forever and forever.

“But here will sigh thine alder-tree,  
And here thine aspen shiver;  
And here by thee will hum the bee,  
Forever and forever.

“A thousand suns will stream on thee,  
A thousand moons will quiver;  
But not by thee my steps shall be,  
Forever and forever.”

—*A Farewell.*

**Robert Browning** (1812–1889), if he be not the most original, is at least one of the most peculiar, and—it must be added—the most unintelligible to ordinary readers, of the poets of the current century. He was born at Camberwell, London, and educated at London University. He was an author at twenty-one, but his first notable poem, *Paracelsus*, was published when he was two years older. Though in several ways a remarkably puzzling production, it gave undoubted proof of great poetical and intellectual ability in one so young. It is mainly a psychological study, and proved, in its subtle analyses of motives, impulses, and influences, an anticipation of much of the author's subsequent work. *Stratford*, an historical drama, was Browning's next effort. He wrote some eight or ten dramas or dramatic sketches in all, none of them—chiefly for lack of incident—successful on the stage, though *A Blot on the 'Scutcheon*, in 1843, ran for several nights, and attracted some attention.

Browning, though never popular, was an indefatigable writer, who bore the neglect of his countrymen with serene good-humor, and persisted in the choice of recondite subjects, an eccentric method of treatment, a style of versification generally harsh and abrupt, and a style of language now pedantic and now familiar, and frequently obscure. His rhymes, too, are often hudibrastic, without being effective. His philosophical reasonings, and even his narratives, are difficult to follow; the reader rises from several perusals with only a vague idea of the author's plan or meaning. One who runs cannot read Browning; he demands the study of a specialist. Yet specialists assure us that if he is difficult

to understand, the delight of understanding him is ample compensation for all the toil which the difficulties he interposes entail, and that he is inferior only to Shakespeare in the richness, subtlety, and suggestiveness of his thought. That he could be intelligible and forcible on a first reading when he chose is well proved by such pieces as *The Pied Piper*, *Hervé Riel*, *How they Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix*, etc.

His principal works (besides those already mentioned) were published in the following order: *Sordello* in 1840, *Pippa Passes* in 1841, *Christmas Eve and Easter Day* in 1850, *Men and Women* in 1855, *The Ring and the Book* in 1868, *Balaustion's Adventure* in 1871, *Fifine at the Fair* in 1872, *Red-cotton Night-cap Country* in 1873, *Jocoseria* in 1883, *Ferishtah's Fancies* in 1884, and *Asolando* a few days before his death at Venice in December, 1889. This is by no means an exhaustive list of his numerous works. Browning lived and studied much in Italy; he went to that country first in 1841; made it his home (at Florence), after his marriage in 1846 with the poetess Elizabeth Barrett, for fifteen years; and found there the themes for most of his best poetry.

The chief feature of his verse is a rugged dramatic strength, arising mainly from a habit of condensed expression, in which rapid and often recondite or technical allusion is blended with quaint imagery. He is a picturesque rather than a melodious poet. He is most powerful in the realization of character, into which he had great analytical insight—more especially if the character was abnormal or placed in unusual circumstances. His range is over an infinite variety of such characters and incidents, but his treatment of the subject is deep and passionate rather than wide and genial. The great object of his poetry seems to have been to exhibit the mystery of human nature, and set forth daily duty as the end of life. His religious views are those of the orthodox Christian. Browning lacks dignity and repose, and is sadly wanting in melody.

*Pippa Passes* is the rather fanciful title of a dramatic poem

(one of a series entitled *Bells and Pomegranates*, 1841-1844), which recounts the one-holiday adventures of an Italian girl, *Philippa*, a silk-factory operative, who, *passing* typical characters in the drama at critical points in their history, unconsciously to herself produces a determining influence on their respective fates. *The Ring and the Book*, commonly regarded as Browning's most elaborate masterpiece, is a detailed narrative in ten versions of what cannot be otherwise described than a vulgar murder case, according as it came under the notice of different witnesses, or was presented to the minds of different judges. *The book* is the record of the case, which the poet found on a stall in Florence, and *the ring* signifies the various testimonies or views of the case—truth mixed with alloy. Probably *Men and Women* is the best understood and most admired of his more serious works, but his popularity, as distinct from his fame—so far as he is popular—rests upon the ballads which describe the midnight gallop of the three couriers, the exploit of the imaginary Breton sailor, and the magical effects of a mysterious pipe played through the streets of Hamelin.

“ Nobly, nobly Cape St. Vincent to the northwest died away ;  
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz Bay ;  
Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay ;  
In the dimmest northeast distance dawned Gibraltar grand  
and gray ;  
' Here and here did England help me : how can I help Eng-  
land ? ’—say  
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise and  
pray,  
While Jove’s planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.”  
—*Home Thoughts from Sea.*

“ We that had loved him so, followed him, honored him,  
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,  
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,  
Made him our pattern to live or to die !  
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,  
Burns, Shelley, were with us—they watch from their graves !  
He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,  
He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves ! . . .



Life's night begins : let him never come back to us !  
 There would be doubt, hesitation, and pain,  
 Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,  
 Never glad confident morning again !”

—*The Lost Leader.*

“ Oh to be in England now that April's there !  
 And whoever wakes in England sees, some morning, unaware, .  
 That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf  
 Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,  
 While the chaffinch sings in the orchard bough,  
 In England now !  
 And after April, when May follows  
 And the white-throat builds, and all the swallows !  
 Hark ! Where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge  
 Leans to the field, and scatters on the clover  
 Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—  
 That's the wise thrush ! he sings each song twice over  
 Lest you should think he never could recapture  
 The first fine careless rapture !”

—*Home Thoughts from Abroad.*

“ Before living he'd learn how to live—  
     No end to learning :  
 Earn the means first—God surely will contrive  
     Use for our earning.  
 Others mistrust, and say ‘ But time escapes !  
     Live now or never !’  
*He* said ‘ What's time ? Leave Now for dogs and apes !  
     Man has Forever !’ . . .  
 Was it not great ? did not he throw on God  
     (He loves the burthen !)  
 God's task to make the heavenly period  
     Perfect the earthen ? . . .  
 That low man seeks a little thing to do,  
     Sees it and does it ;  
 This high man, with a great thing to pursue,  
     Dies ere he knows it.  
 That low man goes on adding one to one ;  
     *His* hundred's soon hit :  
 This high man, aiming at a million,  
     Misses a unit.  
 That has the world here ; should he need the next,  
     Let the world mind him :

This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed  
Seeking shall find him."

—*A Grammarian's Funeral.*

"At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,  
And against him the cattle stood black every one,  
To stare thro' the mist at us galloping past,  
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,  
With resolute shoulders, each butting away  
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray."

—*How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix.*

## OTHER POETS

The son of a banker, and himself the wealthy partner in a London bank, **Samuel Rogers** (1763–1855) was born in one of the suburbs of the great city, and easily survived to the ninety-third year of a life that had been surrounded by every comfort and refinement. His recipe for a long age was "temperance, the bath, and don't fret." No more generous or genial patron of art than Rogers ever existed. For more than half a century his breakfast-table, during the London season, was the gathering-place of men of talent and genius. The host himself was a brilliant talker, and a shrewd and experienced critic. He was eminently a man of taste. He had published so early as his twenty-fifth year a small volume of verse, but it was not till 1792 that he became known as a poet. In that year appeared *The Pleasures of Memory*, a poem in the heroic couplet, the title of which had been suggested by Akenside's *Pleasures of Imagination*, published about half a century before. Rogers's is the more pleasing poem. His genius was happy in the subject; and the subject is one which gives delight to every reader. The feelings are lightly stirred; a pensive placidity pervades the poem. It is thus, for example, he recalls school-boyhood:

"The school's lone porch, with reverend mosses gray,  
Just tells the pensive pilgrim where it lay.  
Mute is the bell that rung at peep of dawn,  
Quickening my truant feet across the lawn:  
Unheard the shout that rent the noontide air  
When the slow dial gave a pause to care.  
Up springs, at every step, to claim a tear,  
Some little friendship formed and cherished here;  
And not the lightest leaf but trembling teems  
With golden visions and romantic dreams."

Other poems by Rogers include *Columbus* (1812), *Human Life* (1819), and notably *Italy*, a poem descriptive of Italian scenes and incidents, in easy, graceful blank-verse, the first part of which appeared in 1822. It is in his *Italy* that Rogers tells the well-known story of Ginevra :

“If thou shouldst ever come by choice or chance  
To Modena, . . . . .  
Stop at a palace near the Reggio-gate,  
Dwelt in of old by one of the Orsini :”

and his relation of the affecting incident is a characteristic specimen of the classical refinement and graceful beauty of his style. The poetry of Rogers, like that of Keats, remained uninfluenced by the feelings which the French Revolution stirred so powerfully in most of their contemporaries. He is a straggler from the eighteenth century.

The most popular Scottish poet after Burns, **James Hogg** (1770-1835) was born in a shepherd's hut in Selkirkshire, and, becoming a shepherd himself in his native district, was and is familiarly known as The Ettrick Shepherd. With little or no aid from art or education, the soul of poetry, which Nature had lodged within him, was developed by local scenery and folk-lore.

“When darkness fell,  
And gray-haired sires the tale would tell ;  
When doors were barred, and eldern dame  
Plied at her task beside the flame,  
That thro' the smoke and gloom alone  
On dim and umbered faces shone ;  
The bleat of mountain goat on high,  
That from the cliff came quavering by ;  
The echoing rock, the rushing flood,  
The cataract's swell, the moaning wood,  
The undefined and mingled hum  
(Voice of the Desert, never dumb !)—  
All these have left within this heart  
A feeling tongue can ne'er impart.”

Encouraged to express this “feeling” by the friendship and example of Scott, to whom he was of some service in collecting material for *The Border Minstrelsy*, Hogg issued various volumes of verse, but had hardly attained to more than local fame until he published *The Queen's Wake* in 1813. This poem is a series of ballads and metrical tales supposed to have been recited at a competition of Scottish bards before Queen Mary and her court at

Holyrood. It is Hogg's best work, affording full scope for the display of his delicate fancy, weird imagination, and grotesque humor. Equally impressive, each in its own way, though the ways are wide asunder as the poles, are the ballad of *The Witch of Fife* with its humorous diablerie, and the fairy tale of *Bonny Kilmeny*. *Kilmeny* is a lovely dream of a pure and beautiful maiden carried away into fairy-land for seven long years.

“When many a day had come and fled,  
 When grief grew calm and hope was dead,  
 When mass for Kilmeny's soul had been sung,  
 When the beadsman had prayed, and the dead-bell rung,  
 Late, late in a gloamin,<sup>1</sup> when all was still, <sup>1</sup> *evening twilight*  
 When the fringe was red on the westlin hill,  
 The wood was sere, the moon i' the wane,  
 The reek o' the cot hung o'er the plain <sup>2</sup> *by itself, alone*  
 Like a little wee cloud in the world its lane,<sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup> *chimney-fire*  
 When the ingle<sup>3</sup> lowed<sup>4</sup> with an eerie leam,<sup>5</sup> <sup>4</sup> *flamed*  
 Late, late in the gloamin, Kilmeny cam' hame!” <sup>5</sup> *lonely light*

Hogg was an industrious writer of both prose and verse. Besides *The Queen's Wake* he produced *Modor of the Moor*, *The Pilgrims of the Sun*, *Queen Hynde*, etc., but especially some charming lyrics of which the address *To the Skylark* (“Bird of the Wilderness”), the love-pastoral *When the Kye Comes Hame*, and the martial strain of *Cam' Ye by Atholl* will serve as specimens. *The Brownie of Bodsbeck* is perhaps his most notable effort in prose.

The most copious writer of the century, not even Scott or Leigh Hunt excepted, was **Robert Southey** (1774–1843). He was the son of a Bristol linen-draper, and was educated at Westminster and Oxford. Like his friend Coleridge, he early felt the influence of the French Revolution. He became, while still a minor, a Unitarian in religion and a republican in politics, wrote *Wut Tyler*, and cherished a vain dream of regenerating society by instituting in America a scheme of government where all should be equal. To the scheme he and his friends gave the name of Pantisocracy. The restless and revolutionary youth developed into a Conservative politician and staid man of letters. At the age of twenty-nine he settled with his wife, one of the three Miss Frickers, at Greta Hall, near Keswick, drawn to the Lake District by the residence there of his friends Wordsworth and Coleridge. Greta Hall was his home for the rest of his life. Before settling in the north country, he had paid two visits to Portugal; kept terms at Gray's Inn with the view of qualifying for a government post by legal training; and published *Joan of Arc*, an historical epic, and *Thalaba*

*the Destroyer*, an Arabian tale in verse of a peculiar measure. At Greta Hall he lived in his library, and worked with systematic regularity.

“My days among the dead are past ;  
 Around me I behold,  
 Where'er these casual eyes are cast,  
 The mighty minds of old :  
 My never-failing friends are they  
 With whom I converse night and day.”

Every hour was accounted for on the time-table of his daily life : “ Three pages of history after breakfast ; . . . then to transcribe or copy for the press, or to make any selections or biographies, or what else suits my humor, till dinner-time. From dinner-time till tea I read, write letters, see the newspaper, and very often indulge in a siesta. After tea I go to poetry, and correct and re-write and copy till I am tired, and then turn to anything else till supper. And this is my life.” He received the laureateship in 1813 on the suggestion of Scott, to whom the honor had been offered, and was twice pensioned by government, on the last occasion (in 1835) with £300 a year. Southey broke down under the continuous strain of hard work, and for the last three years of his life his mind was vacant. The most of his work, and his best work, was done at Greta Hall. It included *Madoc*, *The Curse of Kehama*, and—best of the three because of its human interest—*Roderick the Last of the Goths*—skilfully constructed epics, but too learned and too foreign to be popular. His best prose work is *The Life of Nelson*, written in singularly lucid and graceful English, the happy expansion of an article in the *Quarterly*. It is by this classic biography that Southey's name will live. He wrote also *The Doctor*, *Colloquies*, and a *Life of John Wesley*. Some of Southey's shorter poems, mostly written in his youth, such as *Lord William*, *The Well of St. Keyne*, *The Inchcape Rock*, etc., were at one time much in vogue.

Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864), the son of a medical practitioner at Warwick, was educated at Rugby and Oxford, but, inflamed by the revolutionary ideas of the time, broke away, like Shelley, from parental control, and lived an irregular life in Wales on an allowance of £140 a year. He sought solace in the study of nature, the Latin classics, and English literature, Milton being his favorite author. It was in Wales he made the acquaintance of Lord Aylmer. For the whole of his long life he was the slave of his own impulsive, fiery, fretful spirit. On the death of his mother, a wealthy Warwickshire heiress, he succeeded to property of the value of £80,000, and had squandered it before his death on

objects mostly utopian or unworthy. Nature designed him for an active life, but her intentions were thwarted by his own undisciplined will. For a short time (1808) he served as volunteer on the side of the Spanish patriots in the Peninsular War. In 1815 he was domiciled at Florence. His poetical work includes *Gebir*, a kind of epic (published in 1798), of which he also produced a Latin version; *Count Julian*, a tragedy written in poetical sympathy with Southey, whose *Roderick the Last of the Goths* deals with the same theme; and numerous short pieces, chiefly lyrical, and attractive by the classical beauty of their form, many of which appeared in two miscellaneous collections of prose and verse, *The Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* (1853) and *Dry Sticks Fagotted* (1858). Landor's genius is most fully set forth in his *Imaginary Conversations* (1824-1846)—prose dialogues, one hundred and twenty-five in number, on all manner of subjects, between famous historical characters; they are written in vigorous, compact English, and the sentiment is consistent with the characters selected. Excellent specimens of Landor's charm of sentiment and style will be found in the lines to the *Sister of Elia*, and the short lyrics *Rose Aylmer* and the *Power of Verse*; the haunting melody of *Rose Aylmer* is unmatched.

“Past ruined Ilion Helen lives,  
Alcestis rises from the shades:  
Verse calls them forth; 'tis verse that gives  
Immortal youth to mortal maids.

“Soon shall Oblivion's deepening veil  
Hide all the peopled hills you see,  
The gay, the proud; while lover's hail  
These many summers you and me.”

---

“Ah what avails the sceptred race,  
Ah what the form divine!  
What every virtue, every grace!  
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.  
Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes  
May weep, but never see,  
A night of memories and of sighs  
I consecrate to thee.”

The youngest of ten children born to a Glasgow merchant, **Thomas Campbell** (1777-1844) was educated at the university of his native city, where he gained some distinction for his knowledge of Greek literature; and, after acting for a time as tutor among



the wilds of Argyleshire, came to Edinburgh to study law. The Pleasures of Hope proved a more pleasing study; and on the publication of his poem on that subject, Campbell found himself famous at twenty-two, and was readily diverted to literature. Visiting the Continent in 1800, he saw several scenes of actual warfare, which roused his martial instincts, and are reflected in such heroic strains as *Hohenlinden*, *Ye Mariners of England*, *Lochiel's Warning*, and *The Battle of the Baltic*. One effect of his patriotic lyrics, which are the most magnificent in English literature, was to popularize the navy beyond precedent; and doubtless a share of the triumph at Trafalgar, which he celebrated, is due to Campbell. They brought him in 1806 the reward of a government pension of £200. In 1803 Campbell had gone to London, and there the greater portion of his time was taken up in lecturing, reviewing, editing, and compiling. Original work had to take a subordinate place. He wrote, however, *Gertrude of Wyoming* (1809), a Pennsylvanian tale in the Spenserian measure; and *Theodric* (1824), a domestic tale in rhyming pentameters, like *The Pleasures of Hope*. They are not unworthy of his genius, whose gentler side they illustrate. Several shorter pieces of various quality, such as *Lord Ullin's Daughter*, *The Exile of Erin*, *The Soldier's Dream*, *The Last Man*, *Reullura*, and *Lines on Leaving a Scene in Bavaria*, are, with his matchless war lyrics, likeliest to support his fame. Campbell had a fine ear for melody, and in diction shows as finished an art as that of Pope or Gray. His descriptions of war and storm are sublime; genuine pathos was at his command; and his scenes of domestic peace and love, heightened by romantic feeling, are often extremely beautiful.

“The spirits of your fathers  
 Shall start from every wave!—  
 For the deck it was their field of fame,  
 And ocean was their grave.  
 Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell  
 Your manly hearts shall glow,  
 As ye sweep through the deep  
 While the stormy winds do blow,  
 While the battle rages loud and long,  
 And the stormy winds do blow.

“Britannia needs no bulwarks,  
 No towers along the steep:  
 Her march is o'er the mountain waves,  
 Her home is on the deep.  
 With thunders from her native oak  
 She quells the floods below,—

As they roar on the shore  
 When the stormy winds do blow,  
 While the battle rages loud and long,  
 And the stormy winds do blow."

—*Ye Mariners of England.*

"Adieu the woods, and waters' side,  
 Imperial Danube's rich domain!  
 Adieu the grotto, wild and wide,  
 The rocks abrupt, and grassy plain!  
 For pallid Autumn once again  
 Hath swelled each torrent of the hill;  
 Her clouds collect, her shadows sail,  
 And watery winds that sweep the vale  
 Grow loud and louder still.

"But not the storm, dethroning fast  
 Yon monarch oak of massy pile,  
 Nor river roaring to the blast  
 Around its dark and desert isle;  
 Nor church-bell tolling to beguile  
 The cloud-born thunder passing by,  
 Can sound in discord to my soul;  
 Roll on, ye mighty waters, roll!  
 And rage, thou darkened sky!"

—*On Leaving a Scene in Bavaria.*

**Thomas Moore** (1779–1852), the son of a Catholic tradesman—a licensed grocer—of Dublin, was educated at Dublin University, and made some name for himself as a translator of Anacreon, and a student of French, Italian, and music, before his arrival in London at the age of twenty to study for the legal profession. In 1803, having previously published some erotic effusions over the punning signature of Thomas Little, he was appointed to a post in the public service—that of Admiralty Registrar at Bermuda; but after a disappointing visit to the island, he left the duties of the office to a deputy, and returned to England to publish his *Odes* and *Epistles*. His deputy, fifteen years later, by an act of embezzlement involved the poet in serious pecuniary loss. The *Odes* were severely handled by Jeffrey, and a duel between the irate author and the critic furnished Byron with a theme for banter and mirth. Moore next wrote clever biting satires, *The Two-penny Post-bag*, etc., in the interest of the Whig party, and found a congenial subject for his most pointed invective in the Prince of Wales. In 1817 appeared his longest and most elaborate effort,

*Lalla Rookh*, an Oriental romance, partly prose and partly verse, brilliantly rhetorical, but nothing beyond that. Another ambitious composition of Moore's was *The Loves of the Angels*; but his fame rests upon his *Irish Melodies*, begun in 1807 and continued at intervals till 1834. His style in these truly melodious lyrics is light and graceful, and they have sometimes the further recommendation of genuine pathos and romantic sentiment. Moore's patriotism was sincere, and was stirred from his infancy by Irish faith in the French Revolution. Among his intimate friends were Lord Byron, whose Life he wrote, and Lord John Russell, who wrote his. From 1835 he was in receipt of a government pension of £300. Light-hearted and genial, Moore in private life was yet a warm and faithful friend, and though vain, was free from jealousy. Most popular among his *Melodies* are *The Last Rose of Summer*, *The Meeting of the Waters*, *Love's Young Dream*, *Lesbia*, and the lines in defence of the misguided patriot Robert Emmet.

“ With thee were the dreams of my earliest love,  
 Every thought of my reason was thine;  
 In my last humble prayer to the Spirit above,  
 Thy name shall be mingled with mine.  
 Oh blest are the lovers and friends who shall live  
 The days of thy glory to see,  
 But the next dearest blessing that Heaven can give  
 Is the pride of thus dying for thee!”  
 — *When he who adores thee.*

Thomas Hood (1799-1845), the son of a London bookseller who had been born in Dundee, is chiefly remembered as the most ingenious of poetical punsters. He was, however, not less pathetic than he was undeniably witty, and in his *Plea of the Midsummer Fairies* gave proof of much imaginative power mingled with delicate fancy. He suffered from chronic ill-health. At first he was an engraver, but by the time he was twenty-three had fairly committed his talents to literature. He was successively editor of the *New Monthly Magazine* and *Hood's Own*. He first made his mark (1826) with a very popular collection of *Whims and Oddities* in prose and verse. Of his serious short pieces the best are *The Bridge of Sighs*, *The Dream of Eugene Aram*, *The Deathbed*, and the very powerful and pathetic *Song of the Shirt*, the last contributed to *Punch* just the year before his death; it is a poem which pleads the cause of the overworked seamstress, and reveals the miseries of what has come to be called “sweating.” If he developed the witty vein of his genius more fully than the pathetic, it was because he found wit a surer, or at least a shorter, road to

popularity. He was latterly the recipient of a small and much-needed pension.

“We watched her breathing through the night,  
Her breathing soft and low,  
As in her breast the wave of life  
Kept heaving to and fro.

“So silently we seemed to speak,  
So slowly moved about,  
As we had lent her half our powers  
To eke her living out.

“Our very hopes belied our fears,  
Our fears our hopes belied ;  
We thought her dying when she slept,  
And sleeping when she died.

“For when the morn came, dim and sad,  
And chill with early showers,  
Her quiet eyelids closed : she had  
Another morn than ours.”

—*The Deathbed.*

Elizabeth Barrett, Mrs. Browning (1806–1861), was born in the county of Durham, spent her early years near Ledbury, in Herefordshire, and began to write verses in her childhood. At the age of twenty-four she came before the public with a metrical translation of the Greek tragedy *Prometheus Bound*. A few years afterwards illness and the sudden death of a beloved brother impelled her to a life of the utmost seclusion, and in a darkened chamber, shutting herself out from the world, she read “every book worth reading in almost every language,” and wrote with a devotion that made poetry her regular work. Several volumes of verse were the outcome of all this study. In 1846 she was married to the poet Robert Browning, with whom she went to live in Italy. In 1850 appeared her *Sonnets*, passionate almost as those of Shakespeare, and occasionally equal in poetical structure to those of Wordsworth, or even Milton; they purported to be “from the Portuguese.” In the following year, having witnessed from the windows of her house in Florence certain incidents connected with the Italian revolutionary outbreak of 1848, she published her impressions and feelings of the same under the title of *Casa Guidi Windows*. Her greatest work, certainly her largest, *Aurora Leigh*, a poem in blank-verse, descriptive, like Wordsworth’s *Prelude*, of

the growth of a poetical mind, was issued in 1856. With many picturesque and some melodious lines, it contains much unpoetical and even uninteresting matter, harshly versified. Her sonnets and lyrics are the best efforts of a mind truly poetical, but often diffuse and undisciplined in its expression. If she had written less, and with more restraint, she would have written with more permanent power; as it is, she probably deserves the honor of being the first among English poetesses. Her most effective pieces must include *The Rhyme of the Duchess May*, the pathetic *Cry of the Children*, and the tenderly sympathetic lines entitled *Cowper's Grave*.

“O Poets! from a maniac's tongue was poured the deathless singing;

O Christians! at your cross of hope, a hopeless hand was clinging;

O Men! this man in brotherhood your weary paths beguiling,  
Groaned inly while he taught you peace, and died while ye  
were smiling. . . .

“Wild timid hares were drawn from woods to share his home  
caresses,

Uplooking to his human eyes with sylvan tendernesses.

The very world, by God's constraint, from falsehood's ways removing,

Its women and its men became, beside him, true and loving.”

—*Cowper's Grave*.

**William Edmondstoune Aytoun** (1813-1865), born in Edinburgh, the son of a Writer to the Signet, was educated at Edinburgh University, where, under his future father-in-law, John Wilson (better known as Christopher North), he first distinguished himself in poetical composition by winning a prize for a poem on Judith. He was bred for the Scottish bar, and at the age of thirty-two was appointed Professor of English Literature in Edinburgh University. He also held the sheriffship of Orkney. In 1848 he published his chief work, the *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers*, a subject suggested to him by Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*, which had appeared seven years previously. They are a series of ballads mostly written in a martial key, but with touches of tender pathos, on subjects connected with Scottish history ranging from the time of the Bruce to the last Jacobite rebellion. Other works by Aytoun include the satirical, spasmodic tragedy *Firmilian*, *Bothwell*, and, in collaboration with Theodore Martin, the *Bon Gaultier Ballads*, a series of clever burlesques and parodies. His style is well exemplified in *Edinburgh after Flodden*, the *Execution of*

*Montrose*, and the *Burial-March of Dundee*. The last of these lays concludes thus :

“Open wide the vaults of Athol,  
 Where the bones of heroes rest ;  
 Open wide the hallowed portals  
 To receive another guest !  
 Last of Scots, and last of freemen,  
 Last of all that dauntless race  
 Who would rather die unsullied  
 Than outlive the land's disgrace !  
 O thou lion-hearted warrior,  
 Reck not of the after-time :  
 Honor may be deemed dishonor,  
 Loyalty be called a crime.  
 Sleep in peace with kindred ashes  
 Of the noble and the true,  
 Hands that never failed their country,  
 Hearts that never baseness knew.  
 Sleep ! and till the latest trumpet  
 Wakes the dead from earth and sea,  
 Scotland shall not boast a braver  
 Chieftain than our own Dundee !”

More famous in his lifetime as a critic with a strong bent to theological subjects, but now chiefly regarded as one of the most thoughtful and manly of the poets of his century, **Matthew Arnold** (1822–1888), the eldest son of Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, was born at Laleham, in Middlesex, and educated at Rugby and Oxford, winning at the university, in 1843, the Newdigate prize by a poem on Cromwell. In his twenty-ninth year he was appointed an inspector of schools ; but had previously come before the public with *The Strayed Reveller, and Other Poems*. This volume was followed at intervals by *Empedocles on Etna*, and other books of verse ; and a series of prose essays on *Criticism*, the *Study of Celtic Literature*—probably his best effort in prose—*Culture and Anarchy*, *Literature and Dogma*, etc. In 1857 he was appointed to the chair of Poetry at Oxford, and shortly thereafter published his classical tragedy of *Merope*. Of his narrative poems the most powerful is the tragic story, in blank-verse, of *Sohrab and Rustum*, an episode in Persian history of a father's deadly encounter with his son ; and next to it is the lyrico-dramatic narrative, in rhymed verse of various measure, of the loves of *Tristram and Iseult*—an ancient British legend of the age of Arthur. Some strong sonnets of a Wordsworthian cast, and an elegy, entitled *Thyrsis*, in commemo-



ration of his friend and fellow-poet Arthur Clough, are among the finest things of Arnold's poetical work, all of which is informed with a noble if somewhat austere spirit, expressing itself with classical grace, and with a suggestive compactness of thought and a restrained tenderness of feeling singularly charming to a cultivated mind. Matthew Arnold has not yet received his full meed of praise.

“One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee,  
 One lesson which in every wind is blown,  
 One lesson of two duties kept at one  
 Though the loud world proclaim their enmity—  
 Of toil unsevered from tranquillity !  
 Of labor, that in lasting fruit outgrows  
 Far noisier schemes, accomplished in repose,  
 Too great for haste, too high for rivalry.  
 Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,  
 Man's senseless uproar mingling with his toil,  
 Still do thy quiet ministers move on,  
 Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting ;  
 Still working, blaming still our vain turmoil ;  
 Laborers that shall not fail, when man is gone.”  
 —*Quiet Work.*

#### POETS OF LESS NOTE

Still other poets belonging to this period include the following:

**William Lisle Bowles**, an English clergyman who wrote sonnets, of a meditative strain, that had some influence on the poetical genius of Coleridge ; his versification is remarkable for correctness and refinement of expression.

**Joanna Baillie**, daughter of a Scottish clergyman, wrote verses—some of them in the vernacular of the Lowlands—and poetical dramas (on the Passions) that would not act, but that were much admired by Walter Scott ; her best tragedies are *De Montfort*, *Count Basil*, and *The Family Legend*.

**Robert Bloomfield**, at one time a working shoemaker in London, wrote *The Farmer's Boy*, a descriptive poem of rural life, very smoothly versified.

**Carolina Oliphant (Baroness Nairne)**, daughter of the Laird of Gask, in Strathearn, wrote some sweet and very popular Scottish lyrics, such as *The Land o' the Leal*, *The Auld House*, *The Rowan-Tree* ; her character sketch of *The Laird o' Cockpen* reveals the humorous side of her generally plaintive muse.

**James Montgomery**, a native of Ayrshire, and long editor of a newspaper in Sheffield, was author of *The Wanderer of Switzerland*,

*The World Before the Flood* and *The Pelican Island*; he is better known for his short pieces, such as *The Common Lot*, *Aspirations of Youth*, etc.

**Henry Francis Cary**, a clergyman and distinguished scholar of Oxford, translated the *Divina Commedia* of Dante into blank-verse.

**Robert Tannahill**, a Paisley weaver, wrote some charming Scottish lyrics, such as *Gloomy Winter's Noo Awa'*, *The Flower o' Dunblane*, *Kelvin Grove*, etc., still very popular in his native country.

**Ebenezer Elliott**, a Yorkshire iron-worker, at one time well known as "The Corn-law Rhymer," wrote sympathetically and with manly feeling on the lives of the poor; his *Corn-law Rhymes* came out between 1830 and 1836.

**Reginald Heber**, Bishop of Calcutta, author of the Oxford prize-poem on Palestine, wrote sacred pieces, of which the missionary hymn *From Greenland's Icy Mountains* is the best known.

**Henry Kirke White**, a native of Nottingham, and a youth of much promise, whose life was shortened by over-application to study at Cambridge, wrote some verses, all produced before he was twenty, of which *The Christiad* is his most ambitious attempt.

**Allan Cunningham**, born in Dumfriesshire and bred a mason, was employed in the studio of Chantrey, the sculptor, and wrote some lyrics, many of them in the antique Scottish strain, of which the exiled Jacobite's longing for *Hame*, and the sea-song beginning "A wet sheet and a flowing sea," are good examples; he was an indefatigable writer of both prose and verse, his most popular prose work being *Lives of Eminent British Painters*, etc.

**John Keble**, an English clergyman of great piety and learning, and a leader in the Tractarian movement at Oxford, wrote a popular volume of sacred poetry entitled *The Christian Year*, and was afterwards appointed to the chair of Poetry at Oxford.

**Sir John Bowring**, a noted linguist and traveller, born at Exeter, gave specimens of Russian, Servian, and Magyar poetry translated into English verse.

**Felicia Browne (Mrs. Hemans)**, daughter of a Liverpool merchant, unhappily married to Captain Hemans, wrote many popular and melodious verses which appeal rather to the heart than the intellect; *The Forest Sanctuary* and *Songs of the Affections* are the titles of her best volumes; but she is chiefly known as the authoress of such pieces as *The Graves of a Household*, *The Homes of England*, *The Voice of Spring*, and various short poems on the sea.

**John Clare**, a Northamptonshire peasant, wrote, with singular taste and delicacy of expression, of rural life and scenery; after a

youth of toil and noble self-denial, Clare found influential friends, and took to farming, but squandered his means, and, sinking into despondency, at last died in an asylum.

**Hartley Coleridge**, son of the well-known poet, had something of his father's genius, and a full share also of his father's irresolute will; he wrote some exquisite sonnets and other verse, and a prose work entitled *Lives of Northern Worthies*.

**Robert Poilek**, a young Scottish licentiate of the Secession Church, wrote a long and somewhat gloomy religious poem in blank-verse, which he called *The Course of Time*.

**Winthrop Mackworth Praed**, an accomplished scholar, barrister, and M.P., was the author of some graceful and brilliant poetical pieces, of which *The Red Fisherman* is one of the longest and best.

**Thomas Aird**, a native of Roxburghshire, and long editor of a Dumfriesshire newspaper, wrote, besides numerous verses descriptive of Scottish character and scenery, a wildly imaginative poem entitled *The Devil's Dream on Mount Apsbeck*.

**Richard Monckton Milnes, Lord Houghton**, poet, politician, and traveller, published various books of graceful and thoughtful verse, including *Poems for the People* and *Legendary and Historical Poems*.

**Francis Mahony** ("Father Prout"), a Jesuit priest, celebrated for his wit, eccentricity of conduct, and classical scholarship; latterly correspondent of English newspapers at Rome and Paris; worthy of mention here if only for *The Shandon Bells*, and his rhymed Latin versions of some of Moore's *Irish Melodies*.

**Arthur Hugh Clough**, son of a Liverpool merchant, was the friend and fellow-pupil at Rugby of Matthew Arnold, and wrote in classical hexameter *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*, "a long-vacation pastoral"; he was also the author of *Dipsychus* and *Mari Magno*.

**Dante Gabriel Rossetti**, born in London, the son of a Professor of Italian in King's College, was a painter and poet of the pre-Raphaelite school.

**Alexander Smith**, born at Kilmarnock, for some time pattern-designer in a Glasgow factory, afterwards appointed secretary to the University of Edinburgh, wrote *A Life Drama* and *City Poems*, which show an exuberant fancy and a picturesque style; his prose includes *A Summer in Skye*, and a domestic novel, partly autobiographical, entitled *Alfred Hagart's Household*.

**Charles Stuart Calverley**, a scholarly verse-writer and clever parodist, wrote *Fly-Leaves*, and a small collection of translations.

**Edward Robert Lytton (Lord Lytton)**, who wrote at first under the pen-name of "Owen Meredith," published various volumes of

verse, of which *Clytemnestra*, *Orval* or *The Fool of Time*, and *Glennaveril* may be mentioned; the verse is often artificial and the sentiment false or strained; he was the son of the novelist, and was Viceroy of India from 1876.

**David Gray**, the son of a weaver at Merkland, near Kirkintilloch, was entering on a literary career in London when he was cut off by consumption in his twenty-third year; he left *The Luggie* and *Other Poems* to attest the genuineness of his inspiration.

**James Thomson** ("B.V."), a writer of undoubted power, the son of a Port-Glasgow sailor, wrote *The City of Dreadful Night*, a work of gloomy imagination and despair; he died neglected in 1882 after an eventful life, during which he had been an army school-master, a war correspondent, etc.

**Roden Noel**, a genuine poet of great promise, author of *A Modern Faust*, died 1894.

**Philip Bourke Marston**, (1850-1887), blind from his infancy, author of *All in All*, and *Wind Voices*.

Of living poets, and aspirants to the name of poet, the number is legion. The best, or at least the best known, include the following:

**Philip James Bailey**, who published, in 1839, *Festus*, once greatly admired, now forgotten.

**Sir Theodore Martin**, who translated Goethe, Horace, Catullus, Heine, etc., into English verse.

**Frederick Locker (-Lampson)**, author of *London Lyrics* (1857), a brilliant writer of *vers de société*.

**Coventry Patmore**, author of *The Angel in the House*.

**Gerald Massey**, author of *The Ballad of Babe Christabel*.

**Jean Ingelow**, who has written lyrics and ballads, *A Story of Doom*, and other poems.

**Sir Edwin Arnold**, born 1832; at one time Principal of the Sanskrit College at Poona; author of *The Light of Asia* (1879).

**William Morris**, born near London in 1834, educated at Oxford, and now carrying on business in London as a decorative artist; author of narrative poems, mostly in the Chaucerian manner and metre, of which *The Defence of Guenevere* (1858), *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867), and *The Earthly Paradise* (1868-1870)—a cycle of twenty-four Greek and mediæval stories—are among the most perfect, picturesque, and flowing verse of the Victorian Age: translator also of the *Æneid* (1876) and *The Odyssey* (1887), and some heroic Icelandic sagas such as *The Story of Sigurd*.

**Lewis Morris**, born at Carmarthen in 1835, a barrister, author of *Songs of Two Worlds* (1872-1875), *Epic of Hudes* (1876), and *A Vision of Saints* (1890).

**Alfred Austin**, born near Leeds in 1835, a barrister, author of *The Human Tragedy* (1862-1876), *At the Gate of the Convent* (1885).

**Theodore Watts**, born at St. Ives in 1836, author of some fine sonnets and other uncollected poems; one of the finest critics of our time.

**Algernon Charles Swinburne**, born 1837, in London, son of Admiral Swinburne, educated in France and at Eton and Oxford, author of *Atalanta in Calydon* (1864), *Chastelard* (1865), *Songs Before Sunrise* (1871), *Bothwell* (1874), *Mary Stuart* (1881), *Tristram of Lyonesse* (1882), and various volumes of poems and ballads, exhibiting a marvellous mastery of melodious and energetic English, a voluptuous imagination, and a passionate sense of beauty and sensuous delight; author also of powerful critical essays in impassioned prose on Chapman, Blake, Shakespeare, Victor Hugo, Landor, and Ben Jonson.

**Henry Austin Dobson**, born at Plymouth in 1840, a clerk in the Civil Service, author of various volumes of light and graceful verse (not unmingled with serious thought poetically expressed), such as *Vignettes in Rhyme*, *Proverbs in Porcelain*, *At the Sign of the Lyre* (1885), etc.

**Robert Buchanan**, born in Warwickshire in 1841, and educated at Glasgow, friend and fellow-student of David Gray, author of *Undertones* (1863), *Idyls of Inverburn* (1865), *London Poems*, *Napoleon Fallen*, etc.; his best novel, *God and the Man*; his most popular play, *Sophia* (1886)—adapted from *Tom Jones*.

**Andrew Lang**, born at Selkirk in 1844, educated at St. Andrews and Oxford, author of *Ballads in Blue China* (1880), *Grass of Parnassus* (1888)—graceful, melodious, often thoughtful verse; translator of the *Odyssey* (in collaboration with Professor Butcher, of Edinburgh), *Theocritus*, and seven books of the *Iliad*; an accomplished scholar, critic, and journalist of the light and humorous kind, author of *Custom and Myth* (1884) and *Letters to Dead Authors* (1886).

**Robert Louis Stevenson**, born 1850 and educated at Edinburgh, author of *A Child's Garden of Verses* (1885), *Underwoods* (partly in the Scottish language), *Ballads* (1890); better known by his prose stories, written in a singularly expressive style, *Treasure Island*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Kidnapped* (1886)—continued in *Catriona* (1893)—and *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889).

This list might include other names, otherwise distinguished, and in no wise inferior in verse to several of those already mentioned, more especially William Ernest Henley, Rudyard Kipling, and George Meredith; also Wilfrid Blunt, William Watson, Richard Le Gallienne, Norman Gale, A. Mary F. Robinson, etc.

## A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF AMERICAN POETS OF THE PERIOD

**Fitz-Greene Halleck** (1790–1867), born in Guildford, Connecticut; inspired to some of his best efforts by a visit to the old country; best known for his poem on Marco Bozzaris, the Greek patriot who fell at the moment of victory fighting against the Turks (1823).

**William Cullen Bryant** (1794–1878), a native of Massachusetts; wrote verses when only thirteen; best known for his address *To a Waterfowl*, and *Thanatopsis*—the latter a solemn theme sublimely treated in blank-verse.

**Ralph Waldo Emerson** (1803–1882), a native of Boston, where for a few years in his early manhood he was a Unitarian minister; retired to Concord and abandoned himself to philosophical speculation, becoming the master thinker—the Carlyle—of America; lectured occasionally, and wrote continuously, mainly in prose (*The Method of Nature, Society and Solitude*, and numerous other suggestive and inspiring essays—literary, biographical, philosophical, and moral); but also in verse, of which *Wood-Notes* and the poem on *May Day* are characteristic specimens.

**Nathaniel Parker Willis** (1806–1867), author of much prose and a few books of verse; his poem on *The Leper* and his prose *Pencillings by the Way* are good examples of his style.

**Henry Wadsworth Longfellow** (1807–1882), who has given more people a taste for poetry, and purified and comforted more young minds than any poet of modern times, was born at Portland, Maine, and educated at Bowdoin College, where he was afterwards appointed Professor of Modern Languages. In 1834 he was promoted to Harvard, where he remained twenty years, resigning his chair to Lowell in 1854. He travelled much in Europe, familiarizing his mind with the literatures of Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Denmark, etc. Longfellow showed great taste both in his subjects and his treatment of them; simplicity, clearness, grace, and melody are characteristics of his style. He has written voluminously, but always to sympathetic readers. Among his poetical works may be mentioned *Voices of the Night*, *Erangeline* (in hexameter verse), *The Seaside and the Fireside*, *The Golden Legend*, *Hiawatha* (in unrhymed trochaic tetrameter), *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, *The Divine Tragedy*, as well as *Poems on Slavery* and numerous translations. He has also written a play, *The Spanish Student*, and a few volumes of graceful prose, such as *Outre Mer* and *Kavanagh*.

**John Greenleaf Whittier** (1808–1892), a native of Massachusetts, and a member of the Society of Friends; at first a farm-worker and a shoemaker, afterwards a newspaper editor; wrote and



worked vigorously for the suppression of slavery ; author of *Mogg Megone*, *Voices of Freedom*, *The Tent on the Beach*, *Snow-Bound*, and many other volumes and fugitive pieces ; strength and delicacy of feeling, manliness of thought, and occasionally great lyrical grace and melody of diction (as in *Sunset on the Bearcamp*, *My Playmate*, etc.), are marked features of his poetry ; on the whole, one of America's greatest poets, inspired by a passion for nature and for freedom.

**Edgar Allan Poe** (1809-1849), born at Boston, the son of strolling actors, and maintained and educated by a Virginian planter named Allan, whose name he added to his own ; impulsive and uncontrollable, he died miserably in a Baltimore hospital, after a dissipated and wandering life ; author of many weirdly fascinating but morbid tales in prose, and some poems of singular imaginative beauty and peculiarly suggestive melody ; of his poems may be mentioned *The Raven*, *The Bells*, *The Haunted Palace*, *Annabel Lee*, *To One in Paradise*, etc.

**Oliver Wendell Holmes**, born at Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1809 ; appointed Professor of Anatomy and Physiology at Harvard in 1847 ; best known as an essayist, and the author of *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* (published in 1858) ; the writer also of many light, graceful, and humorous or fanciful poems on various subjects, and a few novels, of which *Elsie Venner* is perhaps the best.

**James Russell Lowell** (1819-1892), born at Cambridge, Massachusetts ; professor at Harvard in succession to Longfellow ; author of various books of poetry, of which the most popular is entitled *The Biglow Papers* (1848), a series of humorous satires in the Yankee dialect ; wrote also *My Study Windows*, and other volumes of delightful prose essays ; Lowell was latterly the American ambassador to England.

**Walt Whitman** (1819-1892), born at West Hills, in Long Island, New York ; the most original and national of American poets ; originator of a unique style, which is neither prose nor verse, yet is not wanting in a wild kind of rhythm, and is often highly poetical ; author of *Leaves of Grass* (1855) and *Drum-Taps* (1865) ; Whitman followed many occupations—printer, teacher, journalist, carpenter, etc. ; his devotion during the Civil War to the sick and wounded of both armies is beyond praise.

**Francis Bret Harte**, born at Albany, New York, in 1837, a humorist in both prose and verse ; author of *The Luck of Roaring Camp*, *The Outcasts of Poker Flat*, and many other sketches of the life and scenery of the Far West ; of his short poems the best known are *The Heathen Chinnee* and *Dickens in Camp*.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Edmund Clarence Stedman, James

Bayard Taylor (a great traveller), Joaquin—more correctly Cincinnati H. — Miller (a Californian), Charles G. Leland ("Hans Breitman"), John James Piatt, James W. Riley, together with Lucy Larcom, Celia Thaxter, Emily Chubbuck Judson ("Fanny Forrester"), and Sarah Piatt, are also names of more or less note which have reached the other side of the Atlantic to find admirers.

## WRITERS OF FICTION

The life and poetry of **Sir Walter Scott** (born 1771, created a baronet 1819, died 1832) have already been considered (p. 277). It only remains to give a connected view of his prose fictions. Great as Scott is as a poet, he is greater as a novelist. But it is a double mistake to suppose that when Scott turned to prose he abandoned poetry, for he still went on writing verse, and his prose is poetical. It was after the Waverley series had begun that *The Lord of the Isles* and *Harold the Dauntless* appeared, and some of Scott's finest lyrics and lyrical fragments were written for, and are scattered over, his prose romances.

It was in 1814, when Scott was forty-three, that the historical romance of *Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since*, was first given to the public. If he was late in beginning, he lost no time when he began, and he needed no apprenticeship. His genius for fiction was fully matured from the first. *Waverley* was like the discovery of a gold-mine—not only to the reading public, whom it enraptured, but to Scott himself, who was now at last aware of his own vast resources. So early as 1805, before even *The Lay* was published, he had thought of trying his hand at prose fiction, and had actually written seven of the opening chapters of *Waverley*. The MS. got mislaid for eight years, and it was the accidental discovery of it among some fishing-tackle in an old mahogany cabinet that reawakened in 1813 his former desire to try his fortune in prose. The desire returned upon him with all the stronger force that he felt his popularity as a metrical romancist on the wane; Byron was the new light in the sky to which all eyes were turned. Miss Edgeworth's success in the portrayal of Irish character and the description of Irish

scenery was also an inducement to Scott to take up the trade of a story-teller with Scotland and Scotsmen for his theme. His best novels are on Scottish subjects, such as *The Antiquary*, or *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*; but his best romance is *Ivanhoe*.

The period of his productivity in fiction is from 1814 to 1831—the year preceding his death. In 1832 he had lost even the power of holding his pen. In those seventeen years he sent forth twenty-nine works of fiction, of which *Rob Roy*, *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and *Ivanhoe*—all masterpieces of a varied art—came out in three successive years—1817, 1818, and 1819 respectively. In 1819 he also published *A Legend of Montrose*. 1816, 1819, and 1823 were his most productive years, each yielding a triple crop. The authorship, for *Waverley* was an anonymous publication, was long kept a secret, but leaked out some years before its public disclosure by Scott in 1827. The series was so rapid and brilliant that many thought the fictions were produced by a club of writers. They are mainly historical romances, dealing with the personages and events of Scottish and English history. The periods selected are the times of the Third Crusade, the Reign of Robert III., the Scottish Reformation, Puritan Rule, the Restoration, the Persecutions in Scotland, and the Porteous Riots in Edinburgh. One romance is based on French history of the time of Louis XI. Equally powerful are Scott's novels of Scottish life and character. Here is the record of the entire series, according to Lockhart:

|                                                                      | PUBLISHED IN |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Waverley . . . . .                                                   | 1814         |
| Guy Mannering . . . . .                                              | 1815         |
| The Antiquary, The Black Dwarf, and Old Mortality . . . . .          | 1816         |
| Rob Roy . . . . .                                                    | 1817         |
| The Heart of Mid-Lothian . . . . .                                   | 1818         |
| The Bride of Lammermoor, A Legend of Montrose, and Ivanhoe . . . . . | 1819         |
| The Monastery, and The Abbot . . . . .                               | 1820         |
| Kenilworth, and The Pirate . . . . .                                 | 1821         |
| The Fortunes of Nigel . . . . .                                      | 1822         |

|                                                                              |      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Peveril of the Peak, Quentin Durward, and St.<br>Ronan's Well . . . . .      | 1823 |
| Redgauntlet . . . . .                                                        | 1824 |
| The Betrothed, and The Talisman . . . . .                                    | 1825 |
| Woodstock . . . . .                                                          | 1826 |
| The Two Drovers, The Highland Widow, and The<br>Surgeon's Daughter . . . . . | 1827 |
| The Fair Maid of Perth . . . . .                                             | 1828 |
| Anne of Geierstein . . . . .                                                 | 1829 |
| Count Robert of Paris, and Castle Dangerous . .                              | 1831 |

In addition, as worthy of special notice, Scott published, between 1827 and 1830, a History of Scotland under the title of *Tales of a Grandfather*.

In these immortal fictions Scott has not only set in vivid presentation before us great personages and incidents of history; he has, besides, created a whole world of imaginary characters and scenes. At the mere mention of the Waverley Novels there rises before us a crowd of figures and faces of all kinds, unknown to history, yet forever familiarized to our imagination. In the crowd we readily discern Jonathan Oldbuck and Edie Ochiltree, Dirk Hatteraick and Dominic Sampson, the Master of Ravenswood and Lucy Ashton, Flora MacIvor and the Baron of Bradwardine, Rebecca and the Templar, Jeanie Deans and Madge Wildfire; Sergeant Bothwell, and Cuddie Headrigg and his mother Mause; Magnus Troil, and Claud Halcro, and Norna of the Fitful-Head; the household of the Mucklebackits, Bailie Nicol Jarvie, Dugald Dalgetty, the Dougal Creature, Caleb Balderstone, Counselor Pleydell, Meg Merrilies the gypsy, Richie Moniplies, Andrew Fairservice, and Nanty Ewart, skipper of *The Jumping Jenny*.

Scott's views of life and nature are objective; they are primarily presented to the eye. But such is the force of his humanity, his humor, his sympathy, and his poetry in their presentation that they at once take the imagination and reach the heart. His plots are often imperfectly constructed, and his language usually flows with careless ease. The great merit of the style is that it does not distract the reader

by calling attention to peculiarities. It is a transparent medium through which we see, undazzled by stained-glass splendors, the pomp and glory of chivalry, and all the varied bustle and glow of life in its native hues. Powerfully vivid in his characterization, Scott is often superb in his descriptions. When the subject is a great one, he never disappoints. He rises with majestic ease to the "height of his great argument." He has exercised an immense influence upon literature, both here and in France. It may safely be said that if the Waverley Novels had not been written, the romantic histories of Alexandre Dumas would never have appeared.

**William Makepeace Thackeray** (1811-1863), the only child of Richmond Thackeray and his wife Anne Beecher, was born at Calcutta, where his father filled an important post in the service of the East India Company. The family to which he belonged came originally from Yorkshire. His father dying and his mother marrying again, Thackeray, then a small boy of five, was sent to England to the care of an aunt, and used to recall a glimpse he had on the voyage home of the exiled Napoleon at St. Helena. At the age of eleven he was placed at the Charterhouse, where he remained for the next six years. Neither here, nor at Cambridge, whither he proceeded in 1829, did he care to earn distinction as a scholar; nor was he a leader in the sports and games of boyhood; yet he was popular among his school-fellows for a certain talent he had already begun to show in the composition of clever satirical verses. It was in a school fight at the Charterhouse that his nose was disfigured. Thackeray was two years at Trinity College, and left without a degree, but with a reputation for smart writing, acquired by a burlesque of young Tennyson's prize-poem, and various contributions to a local weekly called *The Snob*.

The next two years he spent in travel, chiefly in Germany, where he saw Goethe; and on his return to London thought of entering the legal profession. His patrimony then was worth about £500 a year, but the failure of an Indian bank

greatly reduced it, and he was under the necessity of choosing a profession which would be immediately remunerative. He accordingly chose journalism, and figured for a short time in 1833 as contributing editor, and latterly proprietor, of *The National Standard*. It was an unfortunate beginning, for the journal collapsed in little more than a year, and he was left a poor man. Thackeray now thought of being an artist; he had always been fond of drawing, and had no mean skill in caricature ("I think I can draw better than do anything else, and certainly I should like it better than any other occupation"). Accordingly he went to Paris, and devoted every hour of the day to hard work at the *atelier*. It was in 1836 that he first met Dickens, and offered to illustrate *Pickwick* ("I recollect walking up to his chambers in Furnival's Inn with two or three drawings in my hand, which, strange to say! he did not find suitable").

The necessity of making a livelihood for himself and his wife—he had married Isabella Shawe in 1836—drove Thackeray back to literature, and he may be said to have made his *début* in *Fraser's Magazine* with the *Yellowplush Papers*. Under the pseudonym of Michael Angelo Titmarsh he wrote to this periodical, a few years later, the best of his minor works—*The Great Hoggarty Diamond* and *Barry Lyndon*. He was also a regular contributor to the *Times*, and joined the staff of *Punch* in 1840. His connection with the great comic paper lasted thirteen years, and among his associates were Douglas Jerrold, Mark Lemon, and John Leech. Perhaps his best work in *Punch* was *The Snob Papers* and *Jeames's Diary*, in which the vulgarity and meanness of much that passes for good society were exposed with mingled severity and humor. The great calamity of his domestic history happened some time after 1840, when his wife's mind became hopelessly affected.

It was early in 1847, when he was in his thirty-seventh year, that Thackeray's masterpiece, *Vanity Fair*, began to appear in monthly numbers. He was not yet popular, and the numbers of *Vanity Fair* were well advanced before his name began to spread among the people; so little success-



ful, indeed, was the serial at first, that it was subject of consideration at one time whether it should not be stopped. But his Christmas book of that year, *Mrs. Perkins's Ball*, happened to take the popular fancy, and immediately thereafter there was such a rush of subscribers to *Vanity Fair* that Thackeray became at once famous. He lost no time in following up the success of his first novel with *The History of Arthur Pendennis* (1848-1850), and then he came forward as a public lecturer on the English humorists of the eighteenth century. He redelivered those lectures in America. Both at home and abroad they were read by himself to crowded audiences, and added immensely more to his gains than writing had ever done. He lectured in 1856 on the Four Georges in the same way, and with even more pecuniary profit. Meanwhile his permanent fame as a novelist was still growing, by the publication (1852) of his brilliant historical story *Henry Esmond*, to which *The Virginians* (1857) is a sequel. But between these *The Newcomes* was published (in 1853-1855). In 1855 Thackeray was in Rome, where he contracted a fever which weakened his constitution. From the ill effects of that fever he ever afterwards suffered.

The record of the remainder of his life is brief. In 1857 he attempted to enter Parliament as a Radical, but was cast by Oxford city, which he sought to represent. In 1860 he started *The Cornhill Magazine*, which he edited with phenomenal success for about two years; he withdrew from the management only because he found it hard to return unsuitable contributions. For *Cornhill* he wrote *The Adventures of Philip on his Way through the World*, and *Roundabout Papers*, the latter a series of graceful essays on many subjects; and had got well begun with a novel of equal brilliancy to *Vanity Fair*, when he was suddenly struck down on the morning of Christmas Eve, 1863.

The first charm of Thackeray is his style. It is clear, idiomatic, and incisive; conveys much meaning in few words; and is generally controlled by the most perfect taste. His power as a novelist is most manifest in the delineation of character. Like his master Fielding, he portrays

human nature exactly as he found it, but his views of life were directed rather to the weakness and selfishness than to the nobler qualities of humanity. His clever, intellectual people are for the most part rogues and sharpers, while he accredits the nobler qualities of the heart, simplicity, sympathy, and sincerity to the young, the inexperienced, and even the stupid. There is much satire, chiefly of the ironical kind, in his delineations of life, into which there is too frequently infused, especially in his earlier novels, a bitter cynicism. There is no hearty laughter in his pages, such as one finds in Dickens; and his pathos, while it purifies the heart, can hardly be said, like that of Dickens, to refresh it. He drew his characters mainly from fashionable society; it was in the world of the West End of London that he found *Vanity Fair* fully displayed. The most original of his characters include Becky Sharp and Amelia Sedley, Rawdon Crawley and his brother Pitt, Colonel Newcome and Major Pendennis, Harry Foker, Laura, George Warrington, and Barry Lyndon. Thackeray wrote some clever verse, of which *The Mahogany Tree* and *The Ballad of Bouillabaisse* are characteristic specimens.

With not more natural ability than Thackeray, with much fewer advantages of social position and education, but with earlier experience of life, and presumably truer, certainly more genial, knowledge of human nature, **Charles Dickens** (1812-1870) found his way to the heart of the nation a good dozen of years in advance of his great contemporary and rival. *Pickwick*, which made him famous, appeared when he was only twenty-four; it was not till he was thirty-seven that *Vanity Fair* established the reputation of Thackeray.

Dickens was born at Landport, in Hampshire, the second of a family of eight children. His father, John Dickens, was then a clerk in the Navy Pay Department at Portsmouth. In his fourth year his parents, after some preliminary wanderings, settled at Chatham, and there young Dickens spent five happy years, a lonely and rather delicate boy, finding amusement enough among the wonders of Kentish lanes and com-

panionship enough among the books of his father's small library. Smollett, and Defoe, and Goldsmith were his first favorites. But in his tenth year all at once the aspect of the world changed to him. His parents, who seem to have been a fond but thriftless pair of Micawbers, had removed to London, where his father was arrested for debt, and put into the Marshalsea. His mother tried to maintain the family by pawning the books and articles of furniture. They suffered much hardship, and it seemed necessary that as far as it was possible the children should maintain themselves. Accordingly young Dickens was sent to assist in a blacking manufactory, at an engagement of six shillings weekly for his services. The degradation and misery he felt at this employment, which continued for about two years, entered his very soul. He has described this sad experience of his childhood very pathetically in *David Copperfield*.

At last something did turn up to the family's advantage, in the shape of a legacy; the father left the Marshalsea, and the son the blacking manufactory; the boy, still only twelve years of age, was put to school, and, without being taught, managed to gather by desultory reading a great deal of varied information. He left school in his fifteenth year, and for a short time served as office-boy to an attorney's firm. It was now that he began to mark out a course of life for himself. It was his ambition to be—what his father now was—a reporter; accordingly he learned to write short-hand, and by-and-by, having received an appointment as parliamentary reporter for the *Morning Chronicle*, he acquired the name of the quickest and most accurate writer in the gallery of the House of Commons. His task of reporting political speeches was mostly a night one, and he utilized his vacant forenoons by rambles in London, in gratification of his intense interest in the many forms and phases of city life. At last he took to describing what he saw, and the now famous *Sketches by Boz* began to appear in the *Evening Chronicle* and *The Old Monthly Magazine*. He was now earning seven guineas a week. In 1836 the *Sketches* were published in book-form, and then Dickens, glowing with hope, and encouraged by a

prospect of success, boldly struck into *The Pickwick Papers*.

*Pickwick*, illustrated with comic cuts by Hablot Browne ("Phiz"), was an immediate and an assured success. It was at once followed by *Oliver Twist*, which appeared in *Bentley's Miscellany*, the editorship of which Dickens had undertaken. Next came *Nicholas Nickleby*, and, under the fanciful general title of *Master Humphrey's Clock*, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, containing the pathetic history of Little Nell, and *Barnaby Rudge*, Dickens's historical novel, dealing successfully with the times of the Gordon Riots. Dickens now visited Scotland, and was publicly fêted at Edinburgh. Thereafter he proceeded to America (1842), and on his return produced *Martin Chuzzlewit*, which, as it dealt severely with certain traits of the American character, raised on the far side of the Atlantic quite an outcry against the author. It was now he began his famous Christmas annuals, three of which were especially popular, through their mingled tenderness and humor—*A Christmas Carol* (1843), *The Chimes* (1844), and *The Cricket on the Hearth* (1845). In 1846 he visited Italy, and in the same year edited, for a few months only, as he found the work irksome, *The Daily News*. *Dombey and Son* was his next volume; and then (in 1848) he began what is generally allowed to be his masterpiece—the story, largely autobiographical, of *David Copperfield*, containing the fine portrait of Agnes, the best of all his female delineations. Of this novel he wrote, "Like many fond parents, I have in my heart of hearts a favorite child; and his name is David Copperfield." *Bleak House* followed in 1852. He was now editor of *Household Words*, for which he wrote *Hard Times*. He stopped *Household Words*, and started in its place *All the Year Round*, a periodical of which he was sole proprietor, and for which he wrote *A Tale of Two Cities*—a story of the French Revolution—and *Great Expectations*. But before this he had issued *Little Dorrit*. In 1867 he paid his second visit to America, where as a reader of his own works he was enthusiastically received. He had previously read in England and Scotland,

and had developed a remarkable power of dramatic representation. His readings brought him enormous sums of money, but the fatigue attending them, both physical and mental, greatly overtaxed his strength. His latest works were *Our Mutual Friend* and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*—the last unfinished. He died, like Thackeray, of effusion of blood on the brain, brought on by overwork. The sad and unexpected event happened in his own house at Gad's Hill, Rochester, in the beginning of June, 1870. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Dickens's ordinary style is that of the journalist, free, easy, and copious, with no attempt at fine writing, and few traces of culture. He wrote for the masses, and not for scholars. Yet his language, always expressive, sometimes rose to heights of commanding power—as in his description of the wind's vagaries in the opening chapter of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, and in Tom Pinch's ride in the stage-coach to London in the same novel.

It must be owned that there is a stronger tendency to accentuate his characters and his situations than serious art allows. His excess of emphasis is sometimes caricature. Yet the great triumph remains to him that his characters live. They are as individual and as vividly presented as we find real personages in actual life. They are as varied as they are vivid, and their number is not easily told. Among them are Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller, Pecksniff and Tom Pinch, the Cheeryble Brothers, Mark Tapley, Dick Swiveller, Bill Sikes and the Artful Dodger, Fagin and Quilp, Squeers, Sarah Gamp, Uncle Dick, Agnes, Little Nell, Mr. Micawber, and little Paul Dombey.

The great feature of his genius is its geniality. A tender sympathy with the oppressed, especially the young and the weak, and a love of pure innocent fun—such uproarious fun as had not been expressed in fiction since the time of Smollett—are other distinguishing qualities of Dickens as a writer. His novels are often of that class known as "novels with a purpose." The evils of cheap Yorkshire schools, for example, are exposed in *Nicholas Nickleby*, of

the Debtors' Prison in *Little Dorrit*, of the law's delay in *Bleak House*. He was largely successful in attaining his purpose; he did more, it has been truly said, to ameliorate the condition of the poor man than was ever achieved by statesman.

## OTHER NOVELISTS

**Benjamin Disraeli, Lord Beaconsfield** (1804-1881), was the grandson of a Jewish trader who left Venice, where the Disraelis had been long established, and settled in London some time about the middle of the eighteenth century. His father, Isaac D'Israeli, author of *Curiosities of Literature*, was the first of the family to develop a taste for letters; and "Disraeli the Younger," as Lord Beaconsfield in his youth desired to be called, took after his father in preferring literature to trade. It was a choice he could hardly avoid making. He was born in his father's house in London, and, as he himself tells us, was bred in his father's library. He was educated privately; and at the age of thirteen was baptized a Christian.

At seventeen he was articled to a firm of attorneys, and began to keep terms at Lincoln's Inn in 1824. But literature had a greater attraction for him than the study of law, and so early as 1826 he startled the town with *Virian Grey*. The brilliancy of the style, the self-confidence of the author, and the audacity of his thinly-veiled satire made this book the talk of fashionable London. Acquaintance with the personality of the writer only increased the interest of society in him. In appearance, manners, dress, he was like nobody else: "Ringlets of silken black hair; flashing black eyes; an effeminate and lisping voice; his dress-coat of black velvet lined with white satin; white kid gloves, with his wrist surrounded by a long hanging fringe of black silk; and an ivory cane, the handle inlaid with gold, and adorned with a black silk tassel." To this description add "a lividly white face" and handsome, scornful features, and one may form some idea of Disraeli the Younger in the hour of his first triumph. A fop among fops, he had yet the effrontery to fire off a satirical squib at the artificialities of social and political life; this was *The Voyage of Captain Popanilla* (1828), written in imitation of Swift's *Gulliver*.

Disraeli now set out on his travels, and visited Spain, Italy, and Turkey; he ascended the Nile, paced the streets of Jerusalem, mused in the cedar shade of Lebanon. He was absent a year. The finest descriptions of his later romances were the recollection of those wanderings and meditations. On his return he produced



(1832) *Contarini Fleming*, and followed it up with *The Wondrous Tale of Alroy*. Meanwhile he had planned his ambitious *Revolutionary Epick*, of which he published an instalment of three books in 1834; but verse was not his province, and he abandoned the subject. He went back to the novel, and between 1837 and 1847 produced his four best romances—the sweetly-told love-story of *Henrietta Temple*; *Coningsby*, notable for a skilfully constructed plot and clever delineation of character; *Sybil*, scarcely less deserving than *Coningsby*; and *Tancred*, with its Asian mystery and sublimely wild romancing and grand descriptions of Eastern scenery. *Coningsby* and *Sybil* are a recast, in fictional form, of the political ideas contained in his *Vindication of the British Constitution*, a pamphlet which he had flung off in 1835. Just before publishing *Tancred* he sent out his most brilliant political burlesque, *IXION IN HEAVEN*; followed by *The Infernal Marriage*, only less brilliant. In the former Byron figures divertingly as Apollo, and George IV. is made to pose as Jupiter.

But now the game and business of politics claimed the best energies of Disraeli. He had entered Parliament in 1837 as member for Maidstone. Ten years later he first represented Buckinghamshire; and from that year (1847) he took farewell of fiction for nearly a quarter of a century. His political career was a rapid succession of triumphs. He became the leader of the Protectionists; he reconstructed the Tory party; he was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1852, again in 1858, and again in 1866. He was the hero of the Reform Bill of 1867. In 1868 he was prime-minister of England, thus attaining at the age of sixty-four, and within twenty-one years of his first appearance in the House of Commons, the summit of political ambition. He was again premier in 1874. Two years afterwards he was created Earl of Beaconsfield. Of all the many honors with which his career as a statesman was marked, none gave him more gratification than having the queen as his guest at Hughenden. To him the words of Tennyson apply with peculiar fitness: he broke "the invidious bar of birth," he "breasted the blows of circumstance," he lived

. . . "to clutch the golden keys,  
To mould a mighty State's decrees,  
And shape the whisper of a throne."

During all the turmoil of his political life he never quite abandoned literature. His most effective speeches were literary, and he had an original knack of phrase-making. Many of his phrases are still current in our political speech. But he was also for several years the ruling spirit of *The Press* newspaper, and a contrib-

utor to its lively and satirical columns. And in 1870 he reappeared among the novelists with the once famous, now almost forgotten, *Lothair*. It was the fame of the statesman that secured for this book its unbounded but transient popularity. It was followed ten years later by *Endymion*, dull only when compared with the creations of his earlier genius.

As a politician his enemies, especially at the beginning of his career, accused him of unscrupulousness, insincerity, inordinate vanity, and a craving for merely personal distinction and notoriety; this evil reputation still "lives in brass." That he had, at least latterly, the honor and welfare of England at heart, few can truly doubt. He had the tact of a great party leader, and possessed the happy secret of converting foes into friends when he bent his mind to the task.

His novels foster a heroic spirit, noble sentiment, and moral purity. Sympathy with young ambition is felt on every page. It was for the young he chiefly wrote, and he taught them to worship noble ideals, to cherish a wise self-confidence, and to carry their convictions bravely into action. His chief deficiencies are in humor and pathos.

**Edward Lytton Bulwer, Lord Lytton** (1805-1873), was the third of the three sons of General Bulwer, of Haydon Hall, Norfolk. He was carefully brought up from his infancy by his widowed mother, who gave him a taste for literature, and left him, when she died in 1843, the estates of Knebworth and her name. He was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1827 he married an Irish lady—an unfortunate union, soon dissolved. His first ambition was to be a poet; but he abandoned the idea—without, however, ceasing to write verse—and turned his energies to prose fiction. He was one of the most voluminous, versatile, and indefatigable of writers. Only a few of his best or most characteristic works can be named here. They include *Pelham*, *Paul Clifford*, *Eugene Aram*, *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834), *Rienzi* (1835), *Ernest Maltravers* (1837), *The Last of the Barons* (1843); followed by such novels of domestic English life as *The Cartons* (1849), *My Novel* (1853), and *What will He Do with It?* (1858). *Kenelm Chillingly* was in MS. when he died suddenly at Torquay. Lord Lytton's style is highly rhetorical; and his art, though careful and elaborate, is often stiff and mechanical. *Rienzi, the Last of the Tribunes*, is probably his best romance; *The Last of the Barons* is an English historical romance of the times of Warwick the King-maker. His novels of domestic life are his best. The influence of Byron, Sterne, and other writers is clearly seen in the works of Lord Lytton. Notice may here be taken of his two successful plays, *The Lady of Lyons* and *Richelieu*, and of his ad-

mirable translation of the poems of Schiller; his version of Horace is less happy. Lord Lytton also found time for politics, and filled the post of Colonial Secretary in Lord Derby's administration of 1858; a peerage rewarded his services in 1866.

**Charles Reade** (1814-1884), the son of an English squire, was educated at Oxford, and called to the bar in 1843. His first connection with literature was playwriting, in which he was for some time associated with Tom Taylor. Their best collaboration was *Masks and Faces*, produced in 1854. Reade, however, had begun his career as a novelist two years earlier with *Peg Woffington*. This was followed next year by *Christie Johnstone*, the scene of which is laid at a fishing-village near Edinburgh. In 1857 appeared Reade's powerfully sensational novel of *It is Never Too Late to Mend*, dealing with "the horrors of the gloomy jail" and the excitement of Australian gold-digging. *The Cloister and the Hearth*, in 1861, is undoubtedly his best fiction; it is a richly realistic story of mediæval life and manners of the fifteenth century. *Griffith Gaunt*, in 1866; *Put Yourself in His Place*, in 1870; and *The Wandering Heir*, in 1875, are among his later works. Reade is a strong writer with a vigorous style, into which a peculiar tang of individuality is at times infused. He has been called the Rupert of fiction.

**Charlotte Brontë** (1816-1855) first came before the public as the joint author with her two younger sisters, Emily and Anne, of a volume of poems which failed to draw attention. The little book purported to be the composition of Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell—assumed names which only preserved their initials and gave no suggestion of their sex. They were the daughters of a poor Irish clergyman, who had married a Cornish wife, and lived in the bleak village of Haworth, on a gloomy Yorkshire moor. The poverty and eccentricity of their father combined to give them a Spartan upbringing. Their humble ambition was to eke out their father's small income by teaching or by literature. But it was not till Charlotte was thirty-one years of age that the publication of her sensational novel of *Jane Eyre* excited public curiosity—for the authorship was kept a secret. It was a great and immediate success; and was followed by *Shirley* in 1849, and *Villette* in 1853. In 1854 Charlotte Brontë was married to her father's curate, Mr. Nicholls. She died in the following year. *Jane Eyre*, which at times suggests comparison with Richardson's *Pamela*, is, like *Shirley*, a delineation of Yorkshire life; *Villette* describes the writer's experiences as a teacher in Brussels in 1842-1843. **Emily Brontë**, who was regarded as the genius of the family, published *Wuthering Heights* in 1847, and died a year later at the age of twenty-nine.

**Charles Kingsley** (1819–1875) wrote some good verse, and several extremely popular novels, of which the best known are *Alton Locke*, *Tailor and Poet*, published in 1849; *Yeast*, in 1851; *Hypatia*, in 1853; *Westward Ho!* in 1855; and *Hereford the Wake*, in 1866. Kingsley was a native of Devonshire, educated at Cambridge, and appointed first curate and afterwards rector of Eversley, in Hampshire. He also became Canon of Westminster, and Professor of Modern History at Cambridge. *Westward Ho!* his principal work, is a tale of English life and adventure of the stirring times of Raleigh, Drake, and Hawkins. It is full of picturesque scenes, exciting incidents, and a whole world of interesting characters. *Hypatia* is a romance of the fifth century, describing the conflict of Gothic barbarism and Grecian paganism with Christianity. Kingsley's earlier novels deal with the sad social condition of the working classes in both town and country, and suggest such practical means for their improvement as the institution of co-operative societies.

**Marian Evans** (Mrs. Cross), better known as **George Eliot** (1819–1880), occupies the same place in fiction as Mrs. E. B. Browning in poetry; she is the first of our woman novelists. Her father, Robert Evans, a land agent in Warwickshire, was living at Arbury farm on the Newdigate estate at the time of her birth, but removed very shortly thereafter to Griff, in the same county, and here Miss Evans spent the first twenty-one years of her life. Like Mrs. Browning, she was an ardent student, well read in literature and philosophy, and a capable scholar in both the classical and modern languages. Among her early friends were Herbert Spencer, who was for some time her tutor in scientific studies, and George Henry Lewes, with whom she was familiarly associated from 1854 to 1878. In 1880 she was married to Mr. John Cross. Her literary life may be said to have begun with her connection with *The Westminster Review*, but it was not till the publication of her *Scenes of Clerical Life*, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, in 1857, that her powers as an original writer were acknowledged. From this date the rapidity and brilliancy with which her genius developed fairly astonished the critics. *Adam Bede* appeared in 1859, *The Mill on the Floss* in 1860, *Silas Marner* in 1861. She now turned from themes of English provincial life to Italian mediæval history, and produced, after infinite pains—which she used to say “made an old woman of her”—her most artistic and perfect work, *Romola*, published in 1863. It was not, however, so popular as her first novels, and she returned to the old themes in *Felix Holt the Radical* (1866), *Middlemarch* (1871), and *Daniel Deronda* (1876). Meanwhile she published some poetry of more than average merit—*The Spanish Gypsy* (in 1868) and *The Legend of Jubal*

(in 1878). In her English novels she draws largely on her own experiences of life in the Midlands, which, both in their scenery and the character of their inhabitants, she knew intimately. Her own father is drawn in Adam Bede, and he reappears in Caleb Garth. The composition and coloring of Warwickshire landscape are everywhere in these novels. Subtle analysis of character and vigorously realistic descriptions of scenery are her most distinguishing traits. Latterly her treatment of character was growing more and more psychological, and her style—which is always pure and masculine—more and more terse and condensed. There are many wise, witty, and tender sayings in her novels, expressed with the pith and brevity of proverbs. Her views of life, though not without gleams of humor, have a distinct bias to tragic pathos.

Other novelists belonging to the period include the following:

**William Godwin**, author of a powerful sensational novel, *The Adventures of Caleb Williams*, written with much of the direct force and realism of Defoe; Godwin may be said to have introduced the political novel.

**Ann Ward (Mrs. Radcliffe)**, authoress of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, a romance dealing with wildly picturesque scenes and characters; she is the first of the romantic school of fiction.

**Maria Edgeworth**, of an Irish family, but born near Reading, in Berkshire, wrote *Castle Rackrent*, and several volumes of *Popular Tales*, sympathetically illustrative in humor, pathos, and natural description of Ireland and the Irish; she had the merit of arousing the emulation of Scott, whose ambition, at the commencement of his career as a novelist, was simply to do for his native country what Miss Edgeworth was doing for hers.

**Matthew Gregory Lewis**, known as "**Monk**" Lewis, from his best work, *The Monk*, a disciple of the Romantic school, revelled in horrors and the wildest improbabilities.

**Jane Austen**, the daughter of a Hampshire clergyman, produced between 1811 and 1816 her four novels, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, and *Emma*; *Northanger Abbey* appeared after her death. Miss Austen wrote in a simple, clear, and regular style of middle-class life, which she truthfully delineated, her skill being especially marked in the discrimination of character.

**John Galt**, a native of Ayrshire, and an untiring writer of fiction, at his best when depicting the manners of homely Scottish life, wrote *The Annals of the Parish*, *The Entail*, *The Provost*, *The Ayrshire Legatees*, and *Lawrie Todd*—the last-named the story of a Scottish emigrant to America, told with the minute realism which is the principal charm of Defoe.

**Frederick Marryat**, a naval captain, author of many popular sea



stories of a rather rollicking and racy humor, wrote *Jacob Faithful*, *Midshipman Easy*, *The King's Own*, etc.

**G. P. R. James**, the indefatigable author (with the aid of an amanuensis) of nearly two hundred volumes, essayed to follow Scott into the fields of historical romance, and produced *Richelieu*, *Darnley*, *The Gowrie Plot*, etc.

**Charles James Lever**, author of several Irish novels of a rather outrageous but amusing humor, the chief of which are *The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer* and *Charles O'Malley*.

**Anthony Trollope**, an extremely voluminous writer, excelling in the delineation of clerical life and manners, and one of the best imitators of Thackeray, but without Thackeray's habit of moralizing, wrote *The Vicar of Bullhampton*, *Barchester Towers*, *Framley Parsonage*, *The Claverings*, *Lindisfarn Chase*, *The Sacristan's Household*, etc.

**Wilkie Collins**, whose special forte was in construction rather than characterization, wrote *The Woman in White*, *The Moonstone*, *Man and Wife*, *Armada*, *The Law and the Lady*, etc.

**Dinah Mulock (Mrs. Craik)** wrote *John Halifax, Gentleman*, *The Ogilvies*, *The Woman's Kingdom*, etc.

Of living novelists the list is beyond enumeration, but the best, or most popular, or most promising, include the following:

**Margaret Wilson (Mrs. Oliphant)**, born in Mid-Lothian, a ready and fluent writer, author of *The Chronicles of Carlingford* (including *Salem Chapel*), *Phæbe Junior*, etc.

**George MacDonald**, born in Aberdeenshire, at his best in depicting humble Scottish character and local life; author of *David Elginbrod*, *Alec Forbes of Howglen*, and, perhaps best of all, *Robert Falconer*.

**Richard Doddridge Blackmore**, author of *Lorna Doone*, *Christowell* and *Perlycross*—novels of incident and adventure, the scenes of which are laid in Exmoor and Dartmoor.

**George Meredith**, said to be the greatest—certainly the most versatile—of our living novelists, was somewhat late in establishing his reputation, and even yet can hardly be called popular; he is the author of *Rhoda Fleming*, *The Egoist*, *Diana of the Crossways*, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, etc.

**James Payn**, a voluminous author, has written *Lost Sir Massingberd*, *By Proxy*, *Beggar on Horseback*, *Carlyon's Year*, etc.

**Mary Elizabeth Braddon**, a writer of sensational novels, of which the chief are *Lady Audley's Secret*, *Birds of Prey*, *Aurora Floyd*, *The Lovels of Arden*.

**Walter Besant**, author of *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*, *Armored of Lyonesse*, *The Bell of St. Paul's*, etc., and joint-author with James Rice of *Ready-Money Mortiboy*, *The Captain of the Fleet*, etc., novels of incident and adventure.



**Thomas Hardy**, a powerful describer of local character and life, the scene of which is laid in Wessex; author of *The Trumpet-Major*, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, *Life's Little Ironies*, etc.

**William Black**, born in Glasgow, author of *A Daughter of Heth*, *Princess of Thule*, *The Strange Adventures of a Phaeton*, *Judith Shakespeare*, *Prince Fortunatus*, *The Handsome Humes*, etc.; at home among the scenery and characters of the West Highlands.

**Robert Buchanan**, of Scottish birth and educated in Glasgow, author of *God and The Man*, etc.; better known as a poet. (See p. 334.)

**Alexander Allardyce**, born in Aberdeenshire, author of *The City of Sunshine*, descriptive of native life in an Indian village; and *Balmoral, a Romance of the Queen's Country*, dealing vividly with the events of the Fifteen.

**Robert Louis Stevenson**, born in Edinburgh, author of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped*, *The Master of Ballantrae*, *Catriona*, etc., novels of romantic adventure with matter-of-fact sentiment—the style charming. (See p. 334.)

**Mary Augusta Arnold** (Mrs. Humphry Ward), niece of Matthew Arnold, the writer of two religious novels, which had a wide circulation—*Robert Elsmere* and *David Grieve*—but not as novels.

**H. Rider Haggard**, author of *Allan Quatermain*, *King Solomon's Mines*, *She*, *Jess*, etc., novels of romantic adventure in South Africa.

**Rudyard Kipling**, author of numerous powerfully realistic sketches of Anglo-India life, such as *Soldiers Three*, *Life's Handicap*, *Many Inventions*, *The Courting of Dinah Shadd*, etc.

**James M. Barrie**, a native of Forfarshire, author of *Auld Licht Idyls*, *A Window in Thrums*, and *The Little Minister*, all descriptive local types of Scottish character.

To this list might also be added such names as Mrs. Henry Wood, Mrs. Lynn Linton, W. E. Norris, Julian Sturgis, W. Clarke Russell, S. Baring-Gould, A. Conan Doyle, Annie Swan, and "the new Stevenson"—S. R. Crockett.

#### CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF AMERICAN WRITERS OF FICTION BELONGING TO THE PERIOD

**Washington Irving** (1783-1859), author of *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

**James Fenimore Cooper** (1789-1851), author of many novels and tales of romantic adventure, among which are *The Spy*, *The Pilot*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *The Red Rover*, *The Water-Witch*, *The Pathfinder*, *The Redskins*; he is most in his element on the sea and in the primeval forest. A thoroughly American writer.

**Nathaniel Hawthorne** (1804–1864), still the greatest American novelist; author of *Twice-told Tales*, *Mosses from an Old Manse*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The House of the Seven Gables*; his best work deals with abnormal life in New England, and is written in a style of quaint simplicity, truthfulness, and beauty akin to that of Charles Lamb.

**Harriet Beecher (Mrs. Stowe)**, born in 1812; author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), and *Dred, a Tale of the Dismal Swamp*, both written to expose the evils of negro slavery—the former an immensely popular book.

**Charles Farrar Browne** (1833–1867), the creator of the genial showman “Artemus Ward.”

**Frank Stockton** (born 1834), author of *Rudder Grange*, *The Lady or the Tiger*, etc.

**Samuel L. Clemens**, “**Mark Twain**” (born 1835), author of *Huckleberry Finn*, but better known as a somewhat labored humorist.

**Francis Bret Hart** (born 1837), author of *The Luck of Roaring Camp*, *The Outcasts of Poker Flat*, *The Iliad of Sandy Bar*, and other tales dealing with life among the miners of Mexico and the Rocky Mountains.

**William Dean Howells** (born 1837), author of *A Foregone Conclusion*; like **Henry James** (born 1843)—author of *Daisy Miller*, etc.—a skilful analyst of character; Howells is also the author of *The Lady of the Aroostook*, *Their Wedding Journey*, *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, *April Hopes*, *The Shadow of a Dream*, etc., and is more American, and less cosmopolitan, than James.

**F. Marion Crawford** (born 1845), author of *A Roman Singer*, *Mr. Isaacs*, *Saracinesca*, etc.

**Joel Chandler Harris** (born 1848), the discoverer of “Uncle Remus,” the negro *Æsop*.

**Frances Hodgson Burnett** (born 1849), author of *Little Lord Fauntleroy* and *That Lass o' Lowrie's*.

## ESSAYISTS AND CRITICS

**Thomas de Quincey** (1785–1859), a miscellaneous writer of remarkable power, was the son of a Manchester merchant, and was born at Greenhay, near Manchester. The first of many sorrows, the death of a favorite sister, came to him in his sixth year, and the death of his father in the following year destroyed for him the happiness of home-life. He was partly educated at Bath, and at the grammar-school of Manchester, where he made incredible progress in classical study. He could have harangued an Athenian audience in their own

tongue. In his seventeenth year he broke away from the grammar-school, and began a wandering life on a guinea a week in North Wales. Growing tired of the country in less than half a year, he came up to London, where for a whole year he lived, or rather tried to live, by his wits. It was the wretched life of a street waif, homeless, penniless, starving, and fugitive from all friendly inquiry. At last his friends found him, and he was sent in 1803 to Worcester College, Oxford, with a yearly allowance from his guardians of £100. At Oxford he led the shy, retiring life of a recluse, speaking to none, and scarcely knowing his own tutor. It was in the second year of his course at the university that he first began to use opium, to counteract the pain of neuralgia, a disease which he had incurred by exposure during the unhappy period of his vagrancy. It was "a pleasing vice," from which he was never afterwards able to sever himself. He left the university after four years' residence, during which he read a great deal in the classics, philosophy, and English literature. He could easily have taken a brilliant degree, but shrank from oral examination.

In 1809, attracted to the Lake District by a friendship for Coleridge and an admiration for Wordsworth, he settled in the cottage in which Wordsworth had lived at Townend, Grasmere; and this remained his home, more or less continuously, for the next twenty years. He had an independency of £150 a year, most of which he laid out in books. Here he read, and dreamed, and drank laudanum, and drifted into pecuniary difficulties. His daily dose of the seductive liquid rose by the time he was thirty to as much as 8000 drops—a quantity sufficient to poison forty people! In his thirty-first year he married Margaret Simpson, the daughter of a Westmoreland farmer, making at the time a vain effort to be free of his besetting vice. The years 1817-1818 are memorable as the period of his complete subjection to opium. The mingled pleasures and miseries of those years are the subject of the famous *Confessions of an Opium-Eater*, which appeared in *The London Magazine* in 1821, and attracted great attention, as much by the peculiar brilliancy

and music of the style as by the strange disclosures of fact which they contained. During his residence at Grasmere he tried various shifts to add to his slender income—editing even, for a short time, *The Westmoreland Gazette*; but now his connection with *The London Magazine* opened a way for him in periodical literature. He pursued his way with unexpected vigor; and numerous articles, critical, political, philosophical, followed the *Confessions*, all announced to be from the pen of “the English Opium-eater.” During his connection with *The London Magazine*, which lasted till 1824, he lived much in lodgings in London. Pecuniary troubles annoyed him from time to time, and his usual refuge was the laudanum-decanter.

In 1826, being now in his forty-first year, he sent his first articles, on German Prose Classics, to *Blackwood's Magazine*. Next year he contributed the famous essay on Murder, which he humorously affected to consider as one of the Fine Arts. This connection he made through John Wilson (Christopher North), and in 1830 the attraction of his Scottish friends drew him permanently from the Lake District to Edinburgh. He established his wife and family in a cottage, at Duddingston or at Lasswade, he himself preferring for the most part to live in lodgings in Edinburgh. Besides contributing to *Blackwood*, he wrote also for *Tait's Magazine* and *Hogg's Instructor*. During the last ten years of his life he was free of debt, and comparatively free of opium. He died in obscure lodgings in Edinburgh. Shy and eccentric, but with the refined manners of a gentleman and the quiet dignity of a scholar, De Quincey led a strange *twilight* kind of existence, frequently stealing from observation, and ingenious in his concealments. He was an entertaining and eloquent converser when he could be seduced into society and found his company congenial.

De Quincey is even more admired in America than at home. It was in America that his works were first collected. The home edition extends to as many as sixteen volumes, arranged by himself in three classes according as they contain (1) instruction and amusement, or (2) criticism and

philosophy, or (3) the serious expression of exalted feeling and phantasy. A great deal of what he wrote is autobiographical or connected with his own history; much of it is poetry in the form of prose. He is as subtle and complete in analysis as he is vivid and comprehensive in description. A peculiar gravity of manner accompanies both his humor and his pathos. He is one of the greatest masters of English prose. For copious and expressive language; for balance and proportion of sentence, however long or involved; and for the noble music and suggestiveness of his rhythms, De Quincey has scarcely his match. He lifts prose almost to the level of the noblest verse, and much above what passes for meritorious verse. His chief fault in the matter of style is a tendency to over-elaboration and diffuseness. Very characteristic specimens of his genius and style will be found in *The Confessions of an Opium-Eater*, *A Vision of Sudden Death*, *Murder considered as one of the Fine Arts*, and the *Suspiria de Profundis*.

**Thomas Carlyle** (1795-1881), one of the greatest forces in English literature, and probably the most stimulating literary force of the nineteenth century, was born in humble life in the obscure village of Ecclefechan, in Dumfriesshire, twenty-four years after the birth of Scott, and thirty-six after that of Burns. Scotland has produced no literary men so eminent as these three. They enter in close succession, each his own chosen field, and stand there head and shoulders above all others. The field of Burns is Song, and his sway is over the feelings; that of Scott is Romance, and he rules the imagination; that of Carlyle is Thought, and he dominates the reason and the will. His sympathies are in "the living present"; his watchwords are truth and duty; all his interest is in effort and struggle. He is the Seer, the Thinker, the Critic.

He was the son of James Carlyle—a stone-mason who had also tried farming—and was educated at Annan and Edinburgh University with a view to the Church. At Edinburgh he gave himself up for five years to mathematical

study, and took a distaste to preaching. Teaching was only less distasteful, but he remained, teacher or tutor, in the profession into which he had drifted, from his twentieth to his thirtieth year. He began, the year after he left college, to teach mathematics at Annan, and continued to do so at Haddington and Kirkcaldy, till in 1818 he had some thoughts of reading for the bar. But as tutor to two brothers he went back to teaching, with which he now began to conjoin some literary work for *Brewster's Encyclopædia*. He had become an ardent student of German poetry and philosophy, and his first appearance before the public was (in 1824) as translator of Goethe's great prose-work *Wilhelm Meister*. Next year he published a *Life of Schiller*. He was now entirely launched upon literature, and trying to make his way in London.

In 1826, at the age of thirty-two, he married Jane Welsh, who had been his pupil at Haddington; and, settling in Edinburgh, where through his wife he made the acquaintance of Jeffrey, he began to write on German topics for *The Edinburgh Review*. He had previously made a connection with *The London Magazine*. He was already a martyr to dyspepsia, an ailment which afflicted him his whole life long, and which, if it was not the cause of his satirical views of common life, embittered and deepened his satire. He now proposed to withdraw into a moorland solitude—the property of his wife—where he might think undisturbed and undistracted; and Mrs. Carlyle, whose inclination was altogether for society and the city, dubiously consenting, he entered the wilderness of Craigenputtock, part of a bleak Gallowegian moor, though in Nithsdale, in the year 1828. He was a denizen of this drear desert—six miles from a civilized homestead, sixteen from a town—for the next six years. It was misery to his wife, but he himself seems to have been sufficiently happy—at least, for a time. He did excellent literary work here, notably his brilliant *Essay on Burns* for *The Edinburgh*, and the more characteristic *Sartor Resartus*—a strange production, both in subject-matter and in style, which scared every publisher it came to, till *Fraser's Maga-*



*zine* ventured to take it in instalments. It is a book on the philosophy of *Old Clothes*—a metaphorical phrase for the conventions and shams under which the members of a community hide from themselves and each other. "All things which we see and work with, especially we ourselves (and all persons), are a kind of vesture, or sensuous appearance, concealing the *Divine Idea of the World* within us."

Carlyle emerged from the desert at the same time that *Sartor* was astonishing and puzzling London—in 1834. He was now in his fortieth year, and was beginning to be talked of. He established his household in Cheyne Row, Chelsea; and here was his home for the rest of his life. It was chiefly that he might have ready access to books that he left Craigenputtock for Chelsea. His life's history for the next forty-five years is a long record of work. Book after book and pamphlet after pamphlet added to his fame and increased his influence and authority in the land, till his utterances were regarded with something of the veneration paid to an oracle, and he seemed to be invested with the powers of a legislature. In 1837 appeared his powerful history of *The French Revolution* (see p. 377), which is, on the whole, his masterpiece. A singular proof of his genius ("Genius," he said, "is an immense capacity for taking pains") is connected with the writing of this work. He had lent for perusal the MS. of the first volume to his friend, the philosopher John Stuart Mill, and while it was in Mill's custody it was accidentally destroyed. Without a word of reproach, whatever his feelings were, Carlyle, after a brief despondent interval, set to work, and within six months the loss was restored.

In 1837 Carlyle came forward as a lecturer, and delivered various courses to thronged audiences in London. It was for the lecture-room he first wrote *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, published in 1841. He also published about the same time his *Miscellaneous Essays* and his *Past and Present*. But eight years elapsed from the time when he published *The French Revolution* before he was ready with another great work. This time Oliver Cromwell was the subject, and *The*

*Elucidation of Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*—as the book might very well be called—appeared in 1845. Cromwell was a hero after Carlyle's own heart—rough, energetic, earnest, honest. After this laborious and elaborate work, Carlyle took up several smaller subjects, such as current politics (dealt with in *Latter-Day Pamphlets*), the biography of John Sterling (1851), and what he called “The Nigger Question.” And then he braced himself up for the most difficult and exhausting—and not the most successful—of all his tasks, *The History of Frederick the Great*. The undertaking lasted for fourteen years, and the work was published between 1858 and 1865. It is a text-book in military schools in Germany—so fully and so accurately is the history given. Carlyle visited the battle-fields he describes. Frederick was a less congenial hero than Cromwell.

In 1866 Carlyle, now in his seventy-first year, delivered to the students of Edinburgh, who had elected him their Lord Rector, a remarkable extempore address on the Choice of Books. The same year his wife died, and Carlyle was inconsolable. On her gravestone in Haddington Church he caused to be carved the sorrowful testimony, in which regret probably mingles with a sense of bereavement, that “the light of his life was gone out.” In 1875 he published his *Early Kings of Norway*; but he chiefly busied himself after his wife's death with editing her *Memorials*, and writing his own *Reminiscences*. The latter appeared under Froude's editorship shortly after his death.

The style of Carlyle is rugged but strong, and unrhythmical but marvellously picturesque. The sentences are unbalanced, the periods unmusical. It is a style of words and phrases which appeal for their effect on the mind rather to the eye than to the ear. Their revelations are like those of the lightning-flash. His words, singly or in collocation, are sometimes unpronounceable, and seem to be thrown together at hap-hazard, not seldom in defiance of grammatical rule. Yet his style has the great merit of being original and significant; not a phrase, not a word, is used before being tested for its individual work. He employs German

idiom, but it is wrong to say that his style is German. His favorite figures of speech are Exclamation and Apostrophe, nearly always employed with startlingly dramatic effect. They are the natural result of his own creative imagination, and his quick, impulsive sympathy with the men and scenes he describes. For him the scene lives, and he is a part of it. He is a master of irony and vituperation. His scorn of pretence in small creatures withers; his blazing detestation of huge quacks and hypocrites annihilates. Not seldom his anger overtakes both the innocent and the guilty. His way of influencing the reason and the will is less by argument than by iteration; what he says is spoken with authority, and enforced by repetition. It is the higher reason of conscience to which he appeals; he therefore does not seek to convince by communicating proof, but rather to arouse the mind to a sense of its own intuitions.

#### OTHER CRITICS AND ESSAYISTS

One of the most brilliant essayists of his time was **Sydney Smith** (1771-1845), born in Essex, of French extraction on the mother's side of the house, and well educated at Winchester and Oxford. He entered the Church, and became a curate near Amesbury, in Wiltshire. "The squire took a fancy to me," he tells us, "and requested me to go with his son to reside at Weimar, but before we could get there Germany became the seat of war, and in stress of politics we put into Edinburgh, where I remained five years" (1798-1803). His sojourn at Edinburgh, where he officiated in the Episcopalian chapel, was signalized by the foundation of *The Edinburgh Review*, of which, with Jeffrey and Brougham, he was one of the originators. He afterwards held livings in Yorkshire and Somersetshire, and latterly (in 1831) was appointed to a canonry in St. Paul's. He remained in the Yorkshire parish for twenty years, during which time he conjoined the various offices of parson, doctor, magistrate, and man of letters. In 1839, by the death of his younger brother, who had amassed a fortune in India, he found himself, in his grand climacteric, unexpectedly a rich man. As a talker, a lecturer, and a writer Sydney Smith was distinguished for his wit. But to wit he added the more solid qualities of sound reasoning and the rare gift of clear exposition. He threw himself readily into all the moral and political questions of the day, and—though undeniably a humorist—is no less

entitled to the honor of a reformer than to the reputation of a wit. His chief works are *The Letters of Peter Plymley*, in favor of Catholic emancipation, published in 1808; and his *Essays*, contributed to *The Edinburgh Review* between 1802 and 1828. He was the creator of the well-known fictitious character Mrs. Partridge.

Coleridge, the poet, takes a distinguished place among the critics of his time, not only for his connection with the literary department of the periodical press (see p. 286), but also for his *Literaria Biographia*, published in 1817. But the best of his criticism and philosophy was uttered by the living voice; "pen in hand he found a thousand checks and difficulties in the expression of his meaning, but never the smallest hitch in the fullest utterance of it by word of mouth."

The most fearless and influential critic of his time was **Francis Jeffrey** (1773-1850), who was born in Edinburgh, educated first at the high school there, and afterwards at Glasgow and Oxford, and admitted a member of the Scottish bar in 1794. His progress as an advocate was slow. Meanwhile he utilized his leisure by engaging in literary pursuits, and in 1802, in conjunction with Sydney Smith, Henry (afterwards Lord) Brougham, and other young men of like mind, he set agoing *The Edinburgh Review*. The institution of this periodical marks an epoch in the history of literary criticism scarcely inferior in importance to the establishment of the periodical essay by Steele and Addison. Jeffrey's connection as editor and copious contributor to *The Edinburgh Review* continued for over a quarter of a century, and was characterized by great taste and judgment, and a brilliancy of style that won general admiration. He was happiest in his criticism of poetry, though he was occasionally unfortunate in his estimates—never more so than when he declared that Wordsworth's *Excursion* would "never do." His opinion of Scott's *Marmion* was nearly as far wrong; and he was unable to appreciate the peculiar genius of Charles Lamb. By-and-by Jeffrey began to rise in his profession; he made a great reputation as a pleader in addressing juries; was appointed lord advocate in the Whig interest in 1830, with the representation of Edinburgh in the House of Commons a few years later; and in 1834 was raised to a judgeship on the Scottish bench with the title of Lord Jeffrey. He resided latterly at Craigcrook, on the west side of Edinburgh, and there dispensed an elegant hospitality to literary *savans* and distinguished visitors. In conversation and in criticism his influence was always on the side of a pure morality. He had a keen and vivacious rather than an original or profound mind.

The most delightful essayist and quaintest humorist of the

period was **Charles Lamb** (1775-1834). He was of humble origin, but was well educated at Christ's Hospital School, and but for an impediment of speech would have gone to the university with Coleridge to study for the Church. In his seventeenth year he obtained a clerkship in the East India House, and maintained himself and his sister Mary, comfortably because economically, on the small income of the office for many years, till 1825. In that year, he being then fifty, he retired on a generous pension—"came home *forever*," as he said—and presently settled at Enfield, where he died from the results of a trifling fall in 1834. A pathetic tragedy is connected with his domestic life; the taint of madness was in the Lamb family—Charles himself had been for a short time, in his twenty-first year, but only for that one time, confined in an asylum; but Mary was subject to recurrent fits of lunacy, and in one of these mysterious visitations, before any one in the room could interfere, she had stabbed her mother to death. Lamb's devotion to his sister, who in her lucid intervals much resembled himself in shrewd intelligence and gentle, genial humor, more than makes amends for the occasional excesses into which he was drawn by his social instincts. With her he wrote a series of *Tales from Shakespeare*, which is still a popular book with the young. All his life Lamb was a great admirer and student of the Elizabethan drama, and poetry generally; he wrote a poetical play, *John Woodvil*, in the Elizabethan manner, and several characteristic short poems, such as *The Old Familiar Faces*, and the *Lines to Hester*; and he published, as the fruit of his study, *Specimens of the Drama of Shakespeare's Times*, a work which did much to revive the influence of the elder drama. But he found his true sphere in periodical Essays contributed, under the signature of "Elia," to *The London Magazine*. Scarcely less interesting than these inimitable essays—charged as they are with a delicate play of wit, humor, and pathos, expressing itself with the airy graces and quaint devices of Ariel—is the correspondence of Lamb, lately put forth under the editorship of Dean Ainger. The letter in which he speculates on being made Baron—Duke—King—perhaps even Pope Lamb, and the essays on Roast-Pig, All Fools' Day, and Dream-Children—are good examples of the peculiar qualities and flavor of Lamb's easy, playful, intimate style, and strangely changeful or even mingling moods. Lamb's sincerity and humanity of heart endeared him as much to his friends as his wit and penetration of mind. He was a true son of the city, loving the "populous solitude" for its freedom and the "sweet security of its streets"; yet he once climbed Skiddaw, and found at the top a novel but an uneasy delight.

**William Hazlitt** (1778-1830), the son of a Unitarian clergyman,



was born in Shropshire, and trained to be an artist, but abandoned the pencil for the pen. He maintained himself by lecturing, but mainly by writing for the periodical press. His chosen field was poetical criticism, especially that of the Elizabethan age. His intimate knowledge and fine appreciation of old authors, and his eloquent and often impassioned expression of his critical views on all subjects connected with poetry, the drama, and the fine arts—above all, the emphatic force and directness of his judgment—made him a great power, especially among young people, in the earlier part of the century. Among his collected works may be enumerated *The Round Table* and *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* (both published in 1817); his *Lectures on the English Poets* (1818), followed by *Lectures on the English Comic Writers*, and *Lectures on the Dramatic Literature of the Reign of Elizabeth*; his *Table Talk* (in 1821–1822), and *The Spirit of the Age* (1825).

**James Henry Leigh Hunt** (1784–1859), born in London, was the son of an English clergyman who, before he took orders, had been driven by his loyalty to England from America at the time of the American War for Independence. He was educated at Christ's Hospital, where, in the preceding decade, Coleridge and Lamb had been school-fellows. "I had the honor," says Hunt, in his charming Autobiography, "of going out of the school in the same rank, at the same age, and for the same reason [a hesitation of speech] as my friend Charles Lamb." He became a journalist, at first on *The Examiner*, a weekly periodical of which he was joint editor and proprietor with his brother. He was fined and imprisoned for two years for a libellous description of the Prince Regent as "a fat Adonis of fifty." From a happy habit of making the most of his circumstances, characteristic of Hunt's whole life, he scarcely felt the irksomeness of his restraint. He papered the walls of his room "with a trellis of roses"; he had the ceiling "colored with clouds and sky"; the window bars were "concealed with Venetian blinds"; he set up his bookcases "with their busts and flowers"; and he introduced a piano. It was a pleasure to him to see the surprise of a visitor entering and finding so cheerful a room within the walls of a jail. There he received Byron, Moore, and many other friends and sympathizers; and there he wrote his fine narrative poem, *The Story of Rimini*. On his liberation he returned to journalism, with which he combined literature in the various forms of stories, essays, novels, poetry, and lively and entertaining biographical chat about his great contemporaries, and especially himself. He lived a good deal in Italy. But he was always improvident in money matters, and generally imprudent in politics, and thereby put some of his friendships to a severe strain. In 1847 he became a pensioner of the crown to the extent



of £200 a year. Hunt's style is light, lively, picturesque, and bright with delightful fancies often quaintly, sometimes exquisitely, expressed. His inspiration was from the gayer aspects of nature, and social or domestic life—birds and bowers, and flowers and bees, books and the hearth and the home-circle. He was an ardent student of Chaucer and Boccaccio, Ariosto and Spenser. In poetry he belonged, like Keats, to what his literary opponents called the Cockney School—better designated the Literary or Artistic School. Of his numerous productions, besides the Italian tale in verse and the Autobiography already mentioned, it is perhaps sufficient to notice *Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries*, and *A Jar of Honey from Mount Hybla*.

**John Wilson** (1785-1854), better known as Christopher North, was born in Paisley, the son of a wealthy manufacturer; educated at Glasgow and Oxford, trained for the Scottish bar, and appointed to the Chair of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh. At Oxford he won the Newdigate prize for poetical composition, and the reputation of an athlete. He bought Elleray, a small estate on the shore of Windermere, cultivated the acquaintance of Wordsworth, and became a Lake poet by the publication (in 1812) of *The Isle of Palms* and (in 1816) *The City of the Plague*. The loss of his fortune brought him from his Elysium among the English lakes to legal study, lectures, and literature in Edinburgh. It was into *Blackwood's Magazine* he poured his literary wealth. The robustness of his genius now showed itself in his criticism of the literary and political persons and events of his time. Humor, pathos, critical insight, passion, eloquence, and uproarious fun so followed each other, and were so permeated by a strong current of national feeling antagonistic to Cockneydom, in the *Noctes Ambrosianæ* in *Blackwood*, that the heart of Scotland was fairly taken captive, and Christopher North became a household word equally known and admired with the names of Burns and Scott. The greatest merit of Wilson, both as professor and writer, lay in the inspiring power and suggestiveness of his teaching. But, for future fame, he paid too little attention to form, and was wasteful of his splendid gifts "as hill-sides of their streams in thunder-rain." Besides his poetry, which reveals the gentle and delicate side of his genius, and the *Noctes* (1822-1833), which displays his whole nature, he wrote with a quiet and sympathetic tenderness *The Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life* (1822) and *The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay* (1823)—stories descriptive of humble rural life—and the joyous and genial *Recreations of Christopher North*.

**Macaulay, Thackeray, and Matthew Arnold** (all more fully noticed elsewhere) also deserve a place among the critics and essayists of

the period—Macaulay for his brilliant articles contributed to *The Edinburgh Review*, beginning with Milton in 1825, and continued with Clive, Warren Hastings, Bunyan, Johnson, Byron, etc., as well as for biographies of Goldsmith, Pitt, etc., written for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*; Thackeray for his familiar and easy-going *Roundabout Papers*, and especially his *English Humourists* (first given to the public as lectures in 1851); and Matthew Arnold for his thoughtful *Essays in Criticism* (1865 and 1888), *The Study of Celtic Literature* (1867), *Literature and Dogma* (1873), etc.

**John Brown** (1810–1882), an Edinburgh physician, author of *Horæ Subsecivæ*—a volume of essays and sketches, of which the best known is *Rab and his Friends*.

**William Minto** (1846–1893), born at Aberdeen; editor of *The Examiner*, afterwards Professor of Logic and English Literature at Aberdeen, author of *A Manual of English Prose Literature*, and *The Literature of the Georgian Era* (1894).

#### A LIST OF CRITICS AND ESSAYISTS STILL LIVING

**John Ruskin** (born 1819), the foremost in influence and eloquence of art critics, and a prophet—not yet much recognized—of moral and social reform. He was born in London, the only child of a wealthy wine-merchant, originally from Scotland, carefully educated at home from his earliest years, and sent to Christ Church, Oxford, at the age of eighteen. All through his boyhood, from his fifth year, he travelled much with his parents both at home and abroad; was allowed to read very much what he liked, and chose Scott, and Pope's *Homer*, for week-days, reserving *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *Robinson Crusoe* for Sundays; was obliged to read the Bible through once a year, and commit to memory large portions of it; was provided with classical tutors, who never could give him a taste for the classical tongue, and tutors of art, for whom as a pupil he had little regard; wrote tales and verses; was surrounded with costly works of art, pictures, and illustrated editions of the poets; and, when he went to Oxford, was accompanied by his mother, who lived in the town to be near him. He has characterized his education as having been both “too luxurious and too formal.” It is the story of his own past that he began to tell in *Præterita* (1886). At Oxford, where he studied for three years, he took the Newdigate prize for poetry in 1839, and graduated in 1842. In the next year he entered fairly on his career as author by publishing the first volume of *Modern Painters*. The work was completed in 1860, and is to be regarded as his greatest. It originated in a defence of Turner against an attack made upon that great artist in *Blackwood's Magazine*, and was meant to show

the superiority of modern landscapists to the Old Masters. The brilliancy of the style, the intimate knowledge of natural phenomena, the devotion to art, and the originality and audacity of the statements which the work everywhere displays, drew public attention to the "graduate of Oxford" at once, and the second volume, in 1846, established his reputation. Ruskin is a voluminous author, singularly poetical in the choice of his titles as well as in his elaborate descriptions of nature and art. Among his works may be mentioned *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* and *The Stones of Venice*; a treatise on *Pre-Raphaelitism*, or the direct personal study of nature, counselling artists to "paint things as they probably did look and happen, not as, by rules of art developed under Raphael, they might be supposed . . . to have happened"; *Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds*, dealing with Church discipline; *Sesame and Lilies*, two lectures on "good" literature, and *The Crown of Wild Olive* (1865 and 1866); *The Queen of the Air*, dealing with Greek myths; *Aratra Pentelici*, or the principles of sculpture; *Proserpina*, on the subject of wild flowers; *Deucalion*, on geology; and *Fors Clavigera*, a serial put forth at irregular intervals over a number of years, and handling a great variety of topics in a rather loose, colloquial style. Ruskin, who was Slade Professor of Fine Arts at Oxford from 1869 till 1879, has in various ways, by donations of money and art treasures, as well as by his writings, exerted a great influence for true and earnest work, especially among the later generation of artists. In ethics and politics he claims to be the successor of Carlyle. Some years ago he took up his residence on the shore of Lake Coniston in the Lake District.

**David Masson** (born 1822), a native of Aberdeen; a follower of Carlyle in the thoroughness and earnestness of his work; Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature in Edinburgh University; author of *Essays Biographical and Critical*, and *British Novelists and their Styles* (1859), besides numerous reviews and other articles contributed to literary magazines. (See p. 378.)

**Goldwin Smith** (born 1823), a native of Reading; trained to the legal profession; at one time Professor of History at Oxford; now settled at Toronto University, Canada; author of *Irish History and Irish Character*, *Lectures and Essays*, critical biographies of Cowper, Jane Austen, etc.,

**Leslie Stephen** (born 1832), a native of Kensington; one of the editors of the *Dictionary of National Biography*; author of *Hours in a Library*, *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, and critical biographies of Johnson, Pope, Swift, etc.

**Theodore Watts** (born 1836), a native of St. Ives; intimate friend of Tennyson, Rossetti, Swinburne; one of the best critics of the

day ; his essays on literature (contributed to the *Examiner*, *Athenæum*, *Fortnightly*, etc.) uncollected.

**John Morley** (born 1838), a native of Blackburn ; at one time editor of *The Fortnightly Review* ; author of *Burke, a Historical Study*, and Biographies of Voltaire, Rousseau, etc. ; abandoned literature for politics, and is at present (1894) Chief Secretary for Ireland in the Gladstone-Rosebery administration.

**Edward Dowden** (born 1843), a native of Cork ; Professor of English Literature in Dublin University ; author of *The Mind and Art of Shakspeare* (1875), a *Life of Shelley* (1888), and *English Literature of the Nineteenth Century* (not yet published).

**Andrew Lang** (born 1844), a native of Selkirk ; a poet, and one of the most popular critics of the day ; author of *Books and Bookmen*, *Letters to Dead Authors* (1886), *Lost Leaders* (1889), etc. ; translator of Homer (with Professor Butcher, of Edinburgh University), Theocritus, etc. ; contributes largely to current journalism.

**Stopford A. Brooke**, theologian and critic ; author of *Theology in the English Poets* and a *Primer of English Literature* (1876) ; at present incumbent of Bedford Chapel, Bloomsbury ; the biographer of Robertson of Brighton, and editor of Shelley's Poems.

**George Edward Bateman Saintsbury** (born 1845), a native of Southampton, and educated at London and Oxford ; for some time a teacher at Manchester, Elgin, etc. ; an authoritative scholar of French literature ; author of *A History of Elizabethan Literature* (1887), *Essays on French Novelists* (1891), and critical Lives of Dryden, Marlborough, etc.

**William Ernest Henley**, besides being a poet (*A Book of Verses*, etc.) and dramatist (*Beau Austin*, etc.), collaborating in the drama with R. L. Stevenson, is also one of the most brilliant critics of the time ; author of *Views and Reviews* ; till recently editor of *The Scots* (afterwards *The National*) *Observer*.

**Edmund William Gosse** (born 1849), a native of London ; Lecturer on English Literature at Cambridge till 1889, in succession to Leslie Stephen ; author of *Northern Studies* (of Danish and Dutch literature), *English Literature of the Eighteenth Century* (1889), a critical biography of Gray, *Gossip in a Library*, etc., besides *The Secret of Narcissus*, a novel (1892), and several volumes of verse.

#### A LIST OF AMERICAN ESSAYISTS

**Washington Irving** (1783-1859), a native of New York ; author of *The Sketch-Book*, *Brucebridge Hall*, Lives of Columbus, Goldsmith, etc. Irving was a resident in England from 1815 to 1832. He is sometimes called the American Addison.

**Thomas Chandler Haliburton** (1796-1865), a Nova Scotian judge; author of *Sam Slick the Clockmaker*, *Yankee Stories*, *Nature and Human Nature*, etc.

**Ralph Waldo Emerson**, born at Boston in 1803; wrote *Society and Solitude*, etc. He is sometimes called the American Carlyle. (See p. 335.)

**Oliver Wendell Holmes** (born 1809), author of *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, etc. (See p. 336).

**Henry David Thoreau** (1817-1862), born at Concord, the friend of Hawthorn, Emerson, etc.; author of *Walden, or Life in the Woods*, being an account of his experiences of two years' residence in a shanty of his own construction at Walden, on the estate of Emerson.

**James Russell Lowell** (1819-1892), a native of Massachusetts, Longfellow's successor at Harvard, and for some time Ambassador at the British Court; author of some delightful essays collected under such titles as *Among my Books* (1870), *My Study - Windows* (1871), etc.; popularly known as the humorist poet who wrote *The Biglow Papers*. He has also edited with fine taste and sound judgment several of the English poets, from Marvell to Shelley, for American readers.

**Bayard Taylor**, born in Pennsylvania in 1825; a great traveller; author of *Views Afoot*, *At Home and Abroad*, *By-ways of Europe*, etc.

**Samuel Langhorne Clemens**, born in the State of Missouri in 1835; better known as Mark Twain; author of *The Jumping Frog*, *Innocents Abroad*, *The New Pilgrim's Progress*, *Eye-Openers*, and other humorous sketches. The humor is often rather forced.

**John Burroughs**, born in New York State in 1837; author of *Winter Sunshine*, *Locusts and Wild Honey*, *Birds and Poets*, *Fresh Fields*, and other collections of essays on rural and literary subjects.

## HISTORIANS AND BIOGRAPHERS

**Thomas Babington Macaulay, Lord Macaulay** (1800-1859), the greatest historian of the nineteenth century, and the most popular historian of modern times, achieved great distinction, not only as a writer of history, which was his favorite subject, but also as an essayist and poet, and as a statesman and orator. A great charm of all his productions is the style in which they are written, and to the beauty of style he added a fulness of knowledge that was phenomenal. His style was original; Jeffrey was puzzled to know where



he had picked it up; his powers of memory—capacity, retention, and readiness—were astounding; he was always reading, and read everything, and what he once read he never forgot.

He was the eldest of a large family of children born to Zachary Macaulay and his wife Selina Mills. The place of his birth was Rothley Temple, in Leicestershire, the seat of his uncle, after whom he was named, Thomas Babington. His father, the son of a Scottish Presbyterian minister, latterly settled at Cardross, in Dumbartonshire, was, at the time of young Macaulay's birth, secretary to an English company engaged in the establishment of a colony at Sierra Leone for liberated slaves. His mother, the daughter of a Bristol bookseller, belonged to a family of kindly Quakers. Macaulay's education was conducted at home or at private schools till he was seventeen. Stories almost incredible are told of the avidity with which he read, the industry with which he wrote, and the singular precocity of his mind, even in childhood. He was a student at the age of three; at four he was speaking like a book—when suffering from a scald he did not allow that the pain was getting less, but announced that "the agony was abating"; at six he repeated from memory, after a single hurried perusal of the poem, long passages of Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*; before he was eight he had written a *Compendium of Universal History*; at ten he was composing an epic, having already written part of a metrical romance in the manner of Scott's *Marmion*, and made considerable way with a heroic poem on *Olaus the Great, or the Conquest of Mona*.

His career at Trinity College, Cambridge, at which he was entered in 1818, was marked by unusually clever scholarship in every study except that of mathematics. He won medals and prizes for poems and essays; was an eloquent debater at the Union; wrote brilliantly for *The Etonian* and *Knight's Quarterly*—contributing to the latter magazine *Ivry* and the splendid fragment *The Armada*; took his Bachelor's degree in 1822; was made a Fellow of his college in 1824; and in 1825 graduated Master.



When he first went to Cambridge his father was possessor of a fortune made in the African trade; it was lost before Macaulay left Cambridge, and at twenty-five he found himself the hope and main-stay of his family. That year he made his *début* in literature by the publication of his famous article on Milton in Jeffrey's *Review*. It was the first of a long and fascinating series of papers written for the great Whig Quarterly. From his fellowship and his pen he was at this time deriving an income of £500 a year. Meanwhile he had been reading for the bar, and in 1826 joined the Northern Circuit. As a barrister he cannot be said to have had any practice. His attention was divided between politics and literature. In 1830, then in his thirtieth year, he entered Parliament for the pocket borough of Calne, to which he had been presented by one of the Whig leaders, the Marquis of Lansdowne; and at once took an active part in the great debates on Reform. In 1833 he sat in the House for Leeds.

But his fellowship had nearly run out, and it was necessary that he should earn more money for the proper maintenance of himself and his dependent father and sisters. One sister was dead. His mother had died in 1831. There is no more endearing trait in Macaulay's character than the strength and purity of his home-feeling. His letters, his whole conduct shows it. "Love to all," he wrote, "—to all who are left me to love. We must love each other better." For the sake of those loved ones he accepted the post of legal adviser to the Supreme Council of India, and sailed for Calcutta in 1834. The salary was £10,000 a year; and his chief duties proved to be connected with the framing of a penal code. His residence in India turned his attention to Indian subjects—for he still maintained his connection with *The Edinburgh Review* and literature. Literary fame was indeed his sole ambition. Gain, fashion, power, pleasure, he viewed them all with indifference. But the idea of literary fame enraptured him. To him she was "the glorious lady with eyes of light, and laurels clustering round her lofty brow," who had sat by his cradle in childhood "warbling a

sweet strange music." Through all successes and reverses of "the fleeting hour" she waited on him, consoling him with her presence and her assurances, not less in India than in England.

"Thine, though around thy litter's track all day  
White sand-hills shall reflect the blinding glare;  
Thine, though through forests breathing death thy way  
All night shall wind by many a tiger's lair."

His most popular Indian studies were the *Essays on Clive and Warren Hastings*. They first turned public attention to British rule in India, and created a general interest at home in Indian affairs which has existed ever since. But in India he also wrote most of his *Lays of Ancient Rome*.

Macaulay came home in 1838, and resumed his political career, following it concurrently with literary pursuits. He became M.P. for Edinburgh; and filled successively the offices of secretary for war under Lord Melbourne, and paymaster-general of the forces, with cabinet rank, under Lord John Russell. In the interval between those appointments he published *The Lays* (1842), still as fresh and popular after half a century as they were on their first appearance. They are supposed to be four of the lost ballads of ancient Rome from which, according to Niebuhr, such pictorial narratives of the kings and early consuls as those of Livy were constructed. They are just such poems in subject and sentiment as one would expect from Macaulay, and exhibit the same excellent characteristics of picturesque clearness, terse force, and manly freedom of style which are conspicuous in his prose. To Niebuhr for something of his matter, and to Scott for something of his manner, in these noble *Lays*, Macaulay made his acknowledgments. In 1843 he published a collected edition of his *Essays*.

Macaulay's advocacy of religious freedom in the State, more especially his support of the Maynooth grant, roused against him what he called "the sullen priesthood" of his constituency, and through their influence upon the electors he found himself the rejected of Edinburgh in August, 1847.

Before this he had been busy with his great historical work, and in 1848 the first two volumes of *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second* made their appearance, and were bought up at once. Many succeeding editions were required to satisfy the demand, which was almost as great in America as here. The next two volumes were published in 1855, with even greater success, and there was one posthumous volume. It was Macaulay's original design to bring his History down to times within "the memory of men still living"—that is, to the era of the French Revolution at least, or perhaps to the battle of Waterloo. But he does not quite get to the accession of Queen Anne. Taken as it stands, it is the noblest fragment of English history in our literature. Substantially correct, it is not without inaccuracies of detail and misrepresentations of character. Marlborough, for example, and William Penn scarcely get justice; and the account of the Glencoe Massacre is a Scottish grievance.

In 1852 Edinburgh made amends for her mistake of 1847 by returning him spontaneously, without his solicitation of a single vote by public address or private canvass; and he sat as member for the northern capital for the next four years. In 1857 he was raised to the peerage, but enjoyed the title only two years. He died of heart disease at the close of 1859, in the sixtieth year of his age, and in the second week of January, 1860, was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Macaulay's first quality as a writer is lucidity. He is intelligible at once. Much of this is gained by a carefully arranged selection of facts, and by brevity of sentence; but a good deal also is due to a habit of repeating the same idea in different words till the mind of the reader is familiarized with it, and can accept it at last as an epigram. His use of comparison and antithesis conduces to the same end—perfect intelligibility. In illustrating his subject he is unmatched. In argument he is extremely persuasive—states his positions with clearness and moderation, and by logic as much as by rhetoric captivates and convinces. His manner

of teaching history, combined with such a style, could not fail to make him popular. He draws striking portraits of the leading actors in the great drama of life, paints scenes of attractive interest with telling touches of minute detail, and generally prefers to consider history in the light of the manners and pastimes, newspapers and popular ballads, of the times he is studying, to poring over dry statutes and deciphering dirty State documents. Writing with a brilliant and animated pen, he had the art of making fact appear as novel and attractive as fiction. This is something different from saying with Carlyle that his work is fiction and not history.

Other writers of history or biography belonging to this period include :

**Sir James Mackintosh** (1765–1832), a native of Inverness-shire, journalist and barrister in London, and for seven years (1804–1811) recorder of Bombay. On his return from India on a comfortable pension he divided his time between politics and literature, choosing for his literary subjects philosophy and history. He wrote a popular *History of England*, and was busy with *A History of the English Revolution* at the time of his death. His *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, a defence of the French Revolution in opposition to the views of Burke, written when he was only twenty-five, “melancholy experience” soon caused him to disavow.

**Sharon Turner** (1768–1847), a London solicitor, author of a series of volumes dealing, somewhat grandiloquently, with English history from the earliest times to the Union of the Crowns. The first portion, *A History of the Anglo-Saxons* (published 1799–1805), is much the most valuable.

**Sir Walter Scott**, whose *Tales of a Grandfather* (already noticed) appeared during 1827–1830.

**John Lingard** (1771–1851), a Roman Catholic clergyman of Lancashire, memorable for a singularly fresh, original, and impartial *History of England*, written down to the Revolution of 1688.

**Thomas M'Crie** (1772–1835), a Scottish clergyman, author of a warmly sympathetic *Life of John Knox* (1813), and, six years later, a *Life of Andrew Melville*; it was M'Crie who first challenged Sir Walter Scott's representation of the Covenanters in *Old Mortality* as a gross distortion of facts.

**Robert Southey**, whose *Life of Nelson* (1813) is generally regarded as the best biography of the century. He also wrote *A Life of Wesley* (1820), and *Lives of English Admirals* (1833–1840), besides *A History of Brazil* and *A History of the Peninsular War*.

**Henry Hallam** (1777-1859), born at Windsor, educated at Eton and Oxford, and trained for the bar. A commissionership of audit, to which he was soon appointed, gave him the leisure for those historical studies upon which he has reared for himself a lasting fame. His most important works are *View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages* (1818), *Constitutional History of England, from 1485 to 1760* (1827), and *Introduction to the Literature of Europe* (1837). Hallam's style is dignified and succinct, yet generally clear and often engaging; his judicial candor and ample knowledge are universally allowed. Though a Whig, he was respected for his moderation by his political opponents. No more disinterested lover of truth than Henry Hallam can be found among historians. He also wrote a pathetic Memoir of his second son, young Arthur, the beloved of Tennyson.

**Thomas Moore**, the Irish poet, author of *A Life of Sheridan* (1825), and *Notices of the Life of Lord Byron* (1830). Byron at his death left in the custody of Moore the materials for his biography; these Moore sold to Murray, the publisher, who was induced to part with them, and they were destroyed because of the scandalous disclosures they were said to contain. Thereafter Moore wrote the *Notices*, omitting the most objectionable passages of the poet's Memoirs, and presenting a narrative in pure and graceful English which errs in dealing somewhat indulgently with the failings of Byron. He received close upon £5000 for the work.

**Sir William Napier** (1785-1860), a native of Ireland, author of a more interesting and valuable *History of the Peninsular War* (1828-1840) than Southey's. He took part in the actions he describes, and wrote with a soldier's knowledge of warfare and the vivid circumstantiality of an eye-witness.

**Patrick Fraser Tytler** (1791-1849), of Woodhouselee, the best known of a family of historians, author of *A History of Scotland from the Reign of Alexander III. to the Union of the Crowns*. He shows a decided bias against Knox.

**Henry Hart Milman** (1791-1868), a native of London and Dean of St. Paul's, author of *A History of the Jews*, and *A History of Early Christianity* (1840). He also produced several dramas, not intended for the stage, of which *The Fall of Jerusalem* (1820) is the most poetical.

**Sir Archibald Alison** (1792-1867), born in Shropshire of Scottish parents, educated at Edinburgh, and appointed sheriff of Lanark; author of *The History of Europe*, a ponderous, diffuse, and often inaccurate work, dealing first with the period between the French Revolution and the Restoration of the Bourbons, afterwards extended to the accession of Napoleon III.

**George Grote** (1794-1871), member of a German banking family



established in England, and a Radical politician ; author of an authoritative *History of Greece* (1846-1856), at once philosophical and pictorial ; his *Plato and the other Companions of Socrates* appeared in 1865, and was followed seven years later by his *Aristotle*.

**John Gibson Lockhart** (1794-1854), son-in-law of Scott, a member of the Scottish bar, a distinguished but too caustic critic, and a capable novelist (witness *Valerius*), the graceful translator also of Spanish Ballads ; best known for his *Life of Sir Walter Scott* (1837-1839), which is worthy of comparison with Boswell's *Johnson*, and for a *Life of Burns* (1828).

**Thomas Carlyle**, author of a *Life of Schiller* (1825), *The French Revolution* (1837), *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, with Elucidations* (1845), and a *History of Friedrich II., called Frederick the Great* (1858-1862-1865) ; wrote also the *Life of John Sterling*, remarkable more for the artistic finish of the style than the interest of the subject. *The French Revolution* is Carlyle's masterpiece, presenting scenes, actions, and portraits with a rapidity, variety, fulness, and minuteness quite unmatched, in a style at once dramatic, impassioned, and picturesque, such as had never before been attempted, and such as fixes the subject in whole and in part forever on the imagination.

**John Hill Burton** (1809-1881), born in Aberdeen, a member of the Scottish bar, latterly historiographer royal for Scotland ; author of a *History of Scotland* (published 1867-1870), which commences with Agricola's invasion, and comes down to the Revolution of 1688 ; author also of an earlier *History of Scotland, from the Revolution to the Extinction of the last Jacobite Insurrection* (published 1853).

**William Forbes Skene** (1809-1892), born in Kincardineshire, a writer in Edinburgh, historiographer royal after Burton ; author of *The Four Ancient Books of Wales* (1868), and *Celtic Scotland* (1876-1880).

**Alexander William Kinglake** (1811-1891), a native of Taunton, and a barrister ; first noticed by the public for his *Eothen*, a picturesque book of Eastern travel ; famous for his brilliant *History of the Invasion of the Crimea*, in eight volumes, published 1863-1887. He undertook the work at the request of Lady Raglan. He was an eye-witness of the battle of the Alma.

**John Forster** (1812-1876), born in Newcastle ; a barrister, for some time editor of *The Examiner* and *The Daily News* ; famous for pleasing biographies of Goldsmith, Landor, and Dickens.

**Henry Thomas Buckle** (1821-1862), a native of Kent, author of a *History of Civilization in Europe* (unfinished) ; described by Macaulay as "paradoxical and incoherent."

**Edward Augustus Freeman** (1823-1892), a native of Staffordshire,



for some time Examiner in Modern History and Law at Oxford; author of many erudite histories, such as *History and Conquest of the Saracens*, *History of the Norman Conquest*, *Growth of the English Constitution*, etc.; also an *Old English History for Children*.

**John Richard Green** (1837-1883), sometime Examiner in Modern History at Oxford, author of *A Short History of the English People*, a deservedly popular book, *The Making of England* (1882), and *The Conquest of England* (1883)—all written with ample knowledge in a picturesque style.

Any list of eminent living historians and biographers must include:

**James Anthony Froude** (born 1818), a native of Devonshire, and for some time Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford; author of a dramatically written *History of England, from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada*, and *The English in Ireland*, etc. He was also Carlyle's literary executor and biographer (1882-1884).

**David Masson** (already noticed as a critic, p. 368), author of an able and exhaustive *Life of Milton*, and *History of his Time* (published 1858-1880), *British Novelists* (1859), *Life of Drummond of Hawthornden* (1873), etc.; a master of full, accurate, and lucid exposition; historiographer royal for Scotland.

**William Stubbs** (born 1825), a native of Knaresborough, for some time Professor of Modern History at Oxford, now Bishop of Oxford (since 1889); author of the invaluable *Constitutional History of England in its Origin and Development* (down to 1485), *The Early Plantagenets*, etc.

**Samuel Rawson Gardiner** (born 1829), author of a *History of England from the Accession of James I.*, begun to be published in 1863, and coming down in successive instalments—the last in 1889—to the history of the Civil War.

**Justin M'Carthy** (born 1830), a native of Cork; author of a popular *History of Our Own Times* (1880).

**John Skelton** (born 1831), author of *Maitland of Lethington and the Scotland of Mary Stuart*. The *Essays of Shirley* are also from his pen.

And **William Edward Hartpole Lecky** (born 1838), a native of Ireland, who has written on Grattan and O'Connell and other leaders in Irish history, and is author of a *History of Rationalism in Europe*, a *History of European Morals* (1869), and a *History of England in the 18th Century*; he is a Unionist in politics.

#### FAMOUS AMERICAN HISTORIANS

**Daniel Webster** (1782-1852), the Chatham of America, many of whose eloquent *Speeches* deal with historical subjects.

**George Ticknor** (1791–1871), born in Boston, wrote a *History of Spanish Literature*.

**William H. Prescott** (1796–1859), born at Salem, Massachusetts; author of *The Conquest of Mexico* and *The Conquest of Peru*.

**George Bancroft** (1800–1891), born in Massachusetts, the historian of *The United States*.

**John Lothrop Motley** (1814–1877), author of *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, and *History of the United Netherlands*; the Macaulay of America.

Also **John Fiske**, author of *The Discovery of America*, published 1892.

#### WRITERS OF SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY, AND THEOLOGY

**Sir Humphry Davy** (1778–1829), born at Penzance, one of the greatest chemists of the age, wrote *The Elements of Agricultural Chemistry* (1813), and *Consolations in Travel, or The Last Days of a Philosopher*, published posthumously. He was made a baronet in 1818 for his invention of the miner's safety-lamp. He died at Geneva.

**Sir David Brewster** (1781–1868), son of the rector of Jedburgh Grammar-school, famous for his discoveries in optics, wrote in a clear, flowing, popular style *A Treatise on the Kaleidoscope* (1818), *Letters on Natural Magic* (1831), and *A Treatise on the Microscope, or More Worlds than One* (1854). He was also the author of various biographies of scientific men, such as Galileo, Kepler, etc. He invented the kaleidoscope.

**Michael Faraday** (1791–1867), the son of a Surrey blacksmith, was a disciple of Davy, and distinguished himself in the study of electricity. As a lecturer on natural science he had few equals, from a happy gift of lucid exposition and illustration.

**Sir John Herschel** (1792–1871) wrote many treatises on astronomy, and made numerous discoveries, which carried his name all over Europe.

**Sir Roderick Impey Murchison** (1792–1871), a native of Ross-shire, and for nine years a cavalry officer, wrote on geology, his chief works being *The Silurian System* (1839), and *The Geology of Russia and the Ural Mountains* (1845).

**Sir Charles Lyell** (1797–1875), another noted Scottish geologist, but of the Uniformitarian school, was a native of Forfarshire, and published his *Principles of Geology* in 1830–1832; in this work he sought to explain "the former changes of the earth's surface by a reference to causes now in operation." His *Antiquity of Man* appeared in 1863.

**Hugh Miller** (1802–1856) was also a famous Scottish geologist.

He was born in Cromarty, and followed for several years the craft of a stone-mason, but became latterly the editor of *The Witness* newspaper. He wrote *The Old Red Sandstone* (1841), *Footprints of the Creator* (1850), and *Testimony of the Rocks*—not published till after his sudden and melancholy death. He was also author of *Scenes and Legends of the North of Scotland*, *My Schools and Schoolmasters* (a singularly interesting autobiography), as well as *Impressions of England and its People*, etc. A great object of Miller was to reconcile scientific fact with the Mosaic account of the Creation. Critics wondered where he acquired his pure classical English style. He excelled in description.

**Charles Robert Darwin** (1809-1882), grandson of the poet Erasmus Darwin (author of *The Botanic Garden*), born at Shrewsbury, and educated at Edinburgh and Cambridge universities. He was naturalist on board of H. M. ship *The Beagle* in a five years' expedition round the globe. His great work *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* appeared in 1859, and aroused the attention of the civilized world. *The Descent of Man* followed twelve years later. He wrote many other interesting works, chiefly on botanical and geological subjects. A great merit of his writings lies in the amount of his facts, and in the moderation with which he states them. But his results, though gaining acceptance, are still matter of dispute. There is little charm in his style; the charm lies in the originality and boldness of his theories, and the interest of his subject. He is probably the most eminent man of science of the century. His autobiography came out five years after his death.

**John Tyndall** (1820-1893), Professor of Natural Philosophy at the Royal Institution, a native of Ireland. His first important work, undertaken in conjunction with Huxley, was on the structure and motion of glaciers, from observation in Switzerland. He has written, in a style informed with much literary grace, on heat, sound, and kindred subjects, and has done more, perhaps, than any other writer to popularize science throughout the English-speaking world. His more popular books are *Mountaineering*, *Natural Philosophy in Easy Lessons*, *Essays on the Imagination in Science*, *Fragments of Science for Unscientific People*, etc. Like his friend Huxley, he claimed and exercised unrestricted freedom in the investigation of mental and physical science.

Of scientific writers still living, the most prominent in literature are **Alfred Russel Wallace** (born 1822), author of *Travels on the Amazon*, *The Geographical Distribution of Animals*, and (in 1889) *Darwinism*; **Thomas Huxley** (born 1825), the owner of a singularly clear and incisive style, author of *Man's Place in Nature*, *Classifi-*

*cation of Animals*, *Lay Sermons* (1870), *American Addresses* (1877), etc. ; and **Sir Archibald Geikie** (born 1835), a native of Edinburgh, and for some years Professor of Geology in Edinburgh University ; now director-general of the Geological Survey ; author of *The Glacial Drift of Scotland*, *The Scenery of Scotland viewed in connection with its Physical Geography*, etc.

Books of Travel, which often collect the materials of Science, can only be referred to here. Among recent books of this kind are those of Layard, Speke, Grant, Burton, Livingstone, Stanley, and Isabella Bird (Mrs. Bishop). Of an earlier date are those of Franklin and other Arctic navigators ; Mungo Park and James Bruce.

The philosophers of the period include :

**John Stuart Mill** (1806–1873), author of elaborate and independent works on Logic, Political Economy, Representative Government, Utilitarianism, Positivism, etc. His autobiography appeared in 1873.

And among many others still living :

**Herbert Spencer** (born 1820), a native of Derby, and at first an engineer ; now probably the profoundest thinker of the age ; author of many works on Psychology, Biology, and Sociology.

**Frederick Max-Müller** (born 1823), a native of Germany, Professor of Modern Languages at Oxford, a great Oriental scholar and philologist ; author of *Lectures on the Science of Language*, *Chips from a German Workshop*, etc.

The more prominent theologians include :

**Robert Hall** (1764–1831) ; **Thomas Chalmers** (1780–1847), author of *Astronomical Discourses* ; **Richard Whately** (1787–1863), Archbishop of Dublin, author of works on Logic, Rhetoric, and Philology ; **Edward Bouverie Pusey** (1800–1882), the Tractarian ; **Cardinal Newman** (1801–1890), author of *Apologia pro Vita Sua* ; **Thomas Guthrie** (1803–1873) ; **Conybeare** and **Howson**, joint authors of the *Life and Epistles of St. Paul* ; **Robertson of Brighton** (1816–1853) ; **Jowett** (1817–1893), author of a *Commentary* on some of St. Paul's Epistles, and translator of Plato's *Dialogues* ; **Alford**, **Caird**, **Farrar**, **Robertson**, **Smith**, etc.

## I. A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF AUTHORS FROM 1789 TO THE PRESENT TIME

### (A) Surviving from Last Period

1722–1808. John Home, dramatist.

1730–1797. Edmund Burke, essayist, etc.

1731–1800. William Cowper, poet.

- 1733-1804. Joseph Priestley, philosopher.
- 1735-1803. James Beattie, poet.
- 1737-1794. Edward Gibbon, historian.
- 1743-1805. William Paley, philosopher.
- 1744-1825. William Mitford, historian.
- 1745-1814. Charles Dibdin, writer of sea-songs.
- 1745-1831. Henry Mackenzie, essayist, etc.
- 1748-1832. Jeremy Bentham, philosopher.
- 1751-1816. Richard Brinsley Sheridan, dramatist.
- 1752-1840. Fanny Burney (Madame D'Arblay), novelist.
- 1753-1831. William Roscoe, historian.
- 1754-1832. George Crabbe, poet.
- 1757-1827. William Blake, poet.

### (B) Belonging to this Period

- 1756-1826. William Gifford, critic and satirist.
- 1756-1836. William Godwin, novelist.
- 1762-1836. George Colman ("the Younger"), dramatist.
- 1762-1850. William Lisle Bowles, poet.
- 1763-1855. Samuel Rogers, poet.
- 1764-1851. Joanna Baillie, dramatic poet.
- 1764-1823. Anne Radcliffe, novelist.
- 1764-1831. Robert Hall, theologian.
- 1765-1832. Sir Robert Mackintosh, historian, etc.
- 1765-1823. Robert Bloomfield, poet.
- 1766-1845. Caroline Oliphant (Lady Nairne), Scottish poet.
- 1767-1849. Maria Edgeworth, novelist.
- 1770-1850. William Wordsworth, poet.
- 1770-1835. James Hogg, Scottish poet.
- 1771-1845. Sydney Smith, essayist.
- 1771-1832. Sir Walter Scott, novelist and poet.
- 1771-1854. James Montgomery, poet.
- 1772-1834. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, poet.
- 1772-1835. Thomas M'Crie, historian.
- 1772-1844. Henry Francis Cary, translator of Dante.
- 1773-1850. Francis Jeffrey, critic.
- 1774-1810. Robert Tannahill, Scottish song-writer.
- 1774-1843. Robert Southey, poet, etc.
- 1775-1818. Matthew Gregory Lewis, novelist.
- 1775-1834. Charles Lamb, essayist.
- 1775-1817. Jane Austen, novelist.
- 1775-1864. Walter Savage Landor, poet, etc.
- 1777-1844. Thomas Campbell, poet.
- 1778-1830. William Hazlitt, critic.

- 1778-1859. Henry Hallam, historian.  
1779-1839. John Galt, novelist.  
1779-1852. Thomas Moore, poet.  
1780-1847. Thomas Chalmers, theologian.  
1781-1849. Ebenezer Elliot, poet.  
1781-1867. Sir David Brewster, natural philosopher.  
1783-1826. Reginald Heber (Bishop), poet, etc.  
1784-1806. Henry Kirke White, poet.  
1784-1842. Allan Cunningham, Scottish song-writer.  
1784-1859. Leigh Hunt, essayist, etc.  
1784-1862. James Sheridan Knowles, dramatist.  
1785-1854. John Wilson ("Christopher North"), essayist, etc.  
1785-1859. Thomas de Quincey, essayist.  
1787-1863. Richard Whately (Archbishop), theologian, etc.  
1788-1824. Lord Byron, poet.  
1788-1856. Sir William Hamilton, philosopher.  
1788-1845. Richard Harris Barham, versifier ("Ingoldsby Legends").  
1789-1851. James Fenimore Cooper, American novelist.  
1789-1855. Jane Mitford, novelist.  
1791-1868. Henry Milman, poet and historian.  
1792-1871. Sir John Herschel, natural philosopher.  
1792-1866. John Keble, poet.  
1792-1822. Percy Bysshe Shelley, poet.  
1792-1872. Sir John Bowring, translator of verse.  
1792-1848. Frederick Marryat, novelist.  
1792-1867. Sir Archibald Alison, historian.  
1793-1835. Felicia Browne (Mrs. Hemans), poet.  
1793-1864. John Clare, poet.  
1794-1878. William Cullen Bryant, American poet.  
1794-1854. John Gibson Lockhart, biographer, etc.  
1794-1871. George Grote, historian.  
1795-1854. Thomas Noon Talfourd, dramatist.  
1795-1881. Thomas Carlyle, historian, critic, philosopher.  
1796-1821. John Keats, poet.  
1796-1859. William Hickling Prescott, American historian.  
1796-1849. Hartley Coleridge, poet.  
1796-1880. James Robinson Planché, pantomimist.  
1797-1875. Sir Charles Lyell, geologist.  
1799-1845. Thomas Hood, poet.  
1799-1827. Robert Pollok, poet.  
1800-1859. Lord Macaulay, historian and poet.  
1800-1886. Sir Henry Taylor, dramatist.  
1800-1882. Edward Bouverie Pusey, theologian.  
1800-1886. William Barnes, poet (Dorset dialect).



- 1801-1890. John Henry, Cardinal Newman, ecclesiastic, etc.  
 1801-1860. G. P. R. James, novelist.  
 1802-1839. William Mackworth Praed, poet.  
 1802-1876. Thomas Aird, poet.  
 1802-1856. Hugh Miller, geologist.  
 1803-1857. Douglas William Jerrold, dramatist.  
 1804-1881. Benjamin Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield), novelist.  
 1804-1864. Nathaniel Hawthorne, American novelist.  
 1805-1873. Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton, novelist.  
 1806-1867. Nathaniel Parker Willis, American poet.  
 1806-1873. John Stuart Mill, philosopher.  
 1806-1872. Charles Lever, novelist.  
 1806-1861. Elizabeth Barrett (Mrs. Browning), poet.  
 1809-1881. John Hill Burton, historian.  
 1809-1882. Charles Darwin, naturalist.  
 1809-1885. Richard Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton), poet.  
 1809-1892. Alfred Lord Tennyson, poet.  
 1809- W. E. Gladstone, statesman, scholar, and critic.  
 1809-1849. Edgar Allan Poe, American poet.  
 1809-1891. Alexander William Kinglake, historian.  
 1809- John Stuart Blackie (Professor of Greek), poet and translator.  
 1809- Oliver Wendell Holmes, American essayist and poet.  
 1810-1882. John Brown, essayist ("Rab and his Friends").  
 1810-1865. Elizabeth Stevenson (Mrs. Gaskell), novelist.  
 1810-1889. Martin Farquhar Tupper ("Proverbial Philosophy").  
 1811-1863. William Makepeace Thackeray, novelist.  
 1811-1890. William Bell Scott, poet.  
 1812-1876. John Forster, biographer.  
 1812-1870. Charles Dickens, novelist.  
 1812- Harriet Beecher (Mrs. Stowe), American novelist.  
 1812-1889. Robert Browning, poet.  
 1813-1865. William Edmondstone Aytoun, poet.  
 1814-1884. Charles Reade, novelist.  
 1815-1882. Anthony Trollope, novelist.  
 1816-1853. Frederick William Robertson, theologian.  
 1816-1855. Charlotte Brontë, novelist.  
 1816- Philip James Bailey, poet.  
 1816- Sir Theodore Martin, translator of verse.  
 1817-1875. Sir Arthur Helps, historian and essayist.  
 1817-1878. George Henry Lewes, biographer and essayist.  
 1817-1880. Tom Taylor, playwright.  
 1818- James Anthony Froude, historian; Alexander Bain, philosopher.  
 1819-1861. Arthur Hugh Clough, poet.

- 1819-1875. Charles Kingsley, novelist.  
 1819- John Ruskin, art critic, etc.  
 1819-1880. Mary Ann Evans ("George Eliot"), novelist.  
 1820- Margaret Wilson (Mrs. Oliphant), novelist.  
 1820- Herbert Spencer, philosopher.  
 1820-1893. John Tyndall, natural philosopher.  
 1821- Frederick Locker, writer of *Vers de Société*.  
 1822-1888. Matthew Arnold, poet, critic, etc.  
 1822-1862. Henry Thomas Buckle, historian.  
 1822- David Masson, biographer and critic.  
 1822- Alfred Russel Wallace, naturalist.  
 1823-1892. Edward Augustus Freeman, historian.  
 1823- Goldwin Smith, critic.  
 1823- Coventry Patmore, poet.  
 1824- Walter Chalmers Smith, poet.  
 1824-1889. William Wilkie Collins, novelist.  
 1824- George MacDonald, novelist and poet.  
 1825- Richard Doddridge Blackmore, novelist.  
 1825- Thomas Huxley, writer of science.  
 1826-1887. Dinah Maria Mulock (Mrs. Craik), novelist.  
 1828- George Meredith, novelist and poet.  
 1828- Gerald Massey, poet.  
 1828-1882. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, poet.  
 1829- Samuel Rawson Gardiner, historian.  
 1830-1867. Alexander Smith, poet.  
 1830- Jean Ingelow, poet; Henry Calderwood, philosopher;  
       James Payn, novelist.  
 1831-1884. Charles Stuart Calverley, parodist.  
 1831-1892. Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton (Lord Lytton), "Owen  
       Meredith," poet.  
 1832- Lewis Morris, poet; Edwin Arnold, poet.  
 1832- Leslie Stephen, essayist and critic.  
 1834-1882. James Thomson, "B. V.," poet.  
 1834- William Morris, poet.  
 1835- Lewis Morris, poet.  
 1835- Alfred Austin, poet.  
 1836- Theodore Watts, critic and poet.  
 1837-1883. John Richard Green, historian.  
 1837- Algernon Charles Swinburne, poet.  
 1837- Mary Elizabeth Braddon, novelist.  
 1838-1861. David Gray, poet.  
 1838- William Edward Hartpole Lecky, historian.  
 1838- John Morley, biographer and critic.  
 1838- Walter Besant, novelist.  
 1840- Henry Austin Dobson, poet; Thomas Hardy, novelist.

- 1841- William Black, novelist.
- 1841- Robert Buchanan, poet, dramatist, novelist.
- 1843- Edward Dowden, critic.
- 1844- Andrew Lang, critic and poet.
- 1845- George Edward Bateman Saintsbury, critic; William Ernest Henley, poet and critic.
- 1846-1893. William Minto, critic.
- 1849- Edmund William Gosse, critic.
- 1850- Robert Louis Stevenson, novelist and poet.
- 1851- Mary Augusta Arnold (Mrs. Humphry Ward), didactic novelist.
- 1853- Hall Caine, novelist.
- 1859- A. Conan Doyle, story-teller; S. R. Crockett, novelist.
- 1860- J. M. Barrie, essayist and novelist.
- 1864- Rudyard Kipling, poet and writer of fiction.

## II. A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL BOOKS PUBLISHED SINCE 1789

- 1791. Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson*.
- 1792. Rogers's *Pleasures of Memory*.
- 1793. Wordsworth's *Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches*.
- 1794. Paley's *Evidences of Christianity*.
- 1796. Roscoe's *Life of Lorenzo de Medici*.
- 1798. Wordsworth's and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads* (containing *The Ancient Mariner*).
- 1799. Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope*.
- 1800. Coleridge's *Translation of Schiller's Wallenstein*.
- 1801. Scott's *Eve of St. John*, etc., and Southey's *Lord William*, in *Lewis's Tales of Wonders*.
- 1802. Scott's *Border Minstrelsy*; *Edinburgh Review* founded.
- 1805. Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*; Southey's *Madoc*; Roscoe's *Life of Pope Leo X.*; Cary's *Dante's Inferno*.
- 1806. Coleridge's *Christabel*.
- 1807. Byron's *Hours of Idleness*; Moore's *Irish Melodies* (Part I.).
- 1808. Scott's *Marmion*; *Quarterly Review* founded.
- 1809. Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*; Campbell's *Gertrude of Wyoming*.
- 1810. Scott's *Lady of the Lake*; Southey's *Curse of Kehama*.
- 1812. Byron's *Childe Harold* (First Part).
- 1813. Byron's *Giaour* and *Bride of Abydos*; Hogg's *Queen's Wake*; Shelley's *Queen Mab*.
- 1814. Byron's *Lara* and *The Corsair*; Scott's *Waverley*; Wordsworth's *Excursion*.

1816. Scott's *Old Mortality*; Shelley's *Alastor*.
1817. Moore's *Lalla Rookh*; Scott's *Rob Roy*; Blackwood's Magazine founded.
1818. Hallam's *Middle Ages*; Keats's *Endymion*; Scott's *Heart of Mid-Lothian*; Shelley's *Revolt of Islam*.
1819. Scott's *Bride of Lammermoor* and *Ivanhoe*; Byron's *Don Juan* (I. and II.).
1820. Keats's *Eve of St. Agnes*, *Lamia*, and *Hyperion*; Scott's *Monastery* and *The Abbot*; Shelley's *Witch of Atlas* and *Prometheus Unbound*.
1821. Byron's *Cain*; De Quincey's *Confessions of an Opium-Eater*; Galt's *Annals of the Parish*; Shelley's *Adonais*.
1822. Lamb's *Essays of Elia*; Wilson's *Noctes Ambrosianæ* (in Blackwood's Magazine, continued to 1835).
1825. Macaulay's *Essay on Milton*.
1826. Disraeli's *Vivian Grey*; Scott's *Woodstock*.
1827. Lord Lytton's *Pelham*; Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*.
1831. Ebenezer Elliot's *Corn-Law Rhymes* (continued to 1846).
1833. Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* (in Fraser's Magazine).
1834. Lytton's *Last Days of Pompeii*; Blackie's *Faust*.
1835. Browning's *Paracelsus*.
1836. Dickens's *Pickwick Papers*; Disraeli's *Henrietta Temple*.
1837. Carlyle's *French Revolution*; Lockhart's *Life of Scott*.
1838. Dickens's *Nicholas Nickleby*.
1839. Bailey's *Festus*.
1841. Browning's *Pippa Passes*; Carlyle's *Hero Worship*.
1842. Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*.
1843. Dickens's *Martin Chuzzlewit*; Ruskin's *Modern Painters* (vol. i., last vol. in 1860).
1847. Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*; Tennyson's *Princess*; Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*.
1848. Clough's *Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*; Lytton's *The Caxtons*; Macaulay's *History of England* (vols. i., ii.).
1849. Aytoun's *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers*; Dickens's *David Copperfield*; Ruskin's *Seven Lamps*.
1850. Mrs. E. B. Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*; Tennyson's *In Memoriam*.
1851. Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*; Thackeray's *English Humourists* (lectures).
1852. Dickens's *Bleak House*.
1853. Kingsley's *Hypatia*; Landor's *Imaginary Conversations* Lytton's *My Novel*.
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